THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS

THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS

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POETRY AND DRAMA

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Poetry and Drama

MOLIÈRE

(*continued*)

The Misanthrope

Persons in the Play

ALCESTE, *Célimène's lover*
PHILINTE, *Alceste's friend*
ONONTE, *Célimène's lover*
CÉLIMÈNE, *Alceste's lover*
ELIANTE, *Célimène's cousin*
ARSINOË, *Célimène's friend*
ACASTE *and* CLITANDRE, *Marquises*
The Scene is laid in Paris.

ACT I

[*Enter* ALCESTE *and* PHILINTE.

PHILINTE: What is it? What is the matter?

ALCESTE: Leave me, I pray you.

PHILINTE: But, once more, tell me what strange mood——

ALCESTE: Leave me, I say. Run away and hide yourself.

It was not until the production on June 4, 1666, of the "Misanthrope" that the full genius of Molière asserted itself. Regarded purely as a play, the piece may be inferior to "Tartuffe"; but as an acute philosophical study of the eternal passions and sentiments of human nature it stands supreme, not only among the literature of the French stage, but even among Molière's own comedies. Nowhere else are his astonishing

PHILINTE: I cannot make you out when you are in these uncomfortable tempers. Although we are friends, I am one of the first——

ALCESTE: I your friend? Don't depend on that. I have hitherto professed to be so; but after what I have just seen in you, I tell you clearly I am no longer your friend. There is no excuse for such behaviour. You lavish caresses on a man, and show him the greatest affection; and when I ask you who the man is, you can scarcely tell me his name. If I had done such a thing, I should go and hang myself at once from sheer shame.

PHILINTE: For my part, I don't see that it is a hanging matter. If you have no objection, I don't propose to hang myself for this particular offence. When a man comes and greets you warmly, you must pay him back in the same coin, respond in as pleasant a way as possible to his protestations, and return offer for offer and vow for vow.

ALCESTE: There is nothing I hate so much as the grimaces of these protesting people, these charming givers of insincere embraces, these obliging utterers of empty words, who treat alike the man of character and the mere fool. What good is it if a man makes a fuss of you, vows he is your friend, protests his faith, zeal, esteem, and regard for you, and pronounces a glowing eulogy on you, when he hastens to do the same thing to the first scamp he meets? Esteem is based on some kind of preference, and to esteem everybody is to esteem nobody.

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power over his own language, his amazing wit, his masterly satire seen to such distinct advantage. Everything mean and base and gross comes under his merciless lash; his types are not human caricatures, but living representatives of classes and communities of peoples. Yet in conception the "Misanthrope" is tragic rather than comic. "There can be little doubt," says Mr. Frederic Harrison, "that Molière has painted in Alceste not a little of his own noble yearnings and profound weariness, as of a free spirit born out of time into a most artificial and degenerate society."

PHILINTE: But when we are of the world we must practise those civilities which custom demands.

ALCESTE: No, I tell you. We ought to be ruthless in punishing this shameful interchange of mere professions of friendship. My eyes sicken at the sight; whether I am in the town or at court, they show me nothing save objects that raise my bile. I fall into a black humour and into a profound disgust when I see men behaving to one another as they do. I find nothing but false flattery, injustice, selfishness, deceit, roguery. I cannot stand it any longer. I am furious! And it is my design to break a lance with the whole human race.

PHILINTE: Come, seriously, leave all this wild talk. The world will not be changed for all the pains you take. And, since plain speaking has such a charm for you, I will tell you quite plainly that, wherever you go, this complaint of yours is as good as a play, and that all this violent rage against the manners of the age merely makes you ridiculous in the opinion of most persons.

ALCESTE: So much the better, upon my word, so much the better; it is what I want! All men are so absolutely odious to me that I should be sorry to seem wise to them.

PHILINTE: Do you really wish great harm to the human race?

ALCESTE: Yes, I have conceived an intense hatred for it.

PHILINTE: Are all poor mortals without any exception to be included in this aversion?

ALCESTE: Yes, my aversion is general, and I hate all men; some because they are wicked and evil-doers, and others because they are complacent to the wicked, and have not for them that strong loathing with which vice ought to inspire all virtuous souls.

PHILINTE: Good Heavens! Let us worry ourselves a little less about the morals of the age, and let us make allowances for human nature. Let us not examine it with great rigour, but let us look with some mildness on

its shortcomings. In this world we need a virtue that is pliable; by being too wise we may commit mistakes. True reason shuns all extremes, and would have us soberly wise. This great stiffness, this copying of the virtues of ancient times, clashes too much with the common usages of our age; it requires too great perfection from mortals. I take people quite quietly as they are, I accustom my mind to endure what they do, and I believe that at court, as in the city, my phlegm is as philosophical as your bile.

ALCESTE: But this phlegm, monsieur—you who reason so well—this phlegm, can it not be stirred by anything? If, by chance, it happened that a friend betrayed you, or laid a plot to get hold of your property, would you watch all this without getting into a passion?

PHILINTE: Yes. I regard all these feelings at which your soul murmurs as vices inseparable from human nature. In short, my mind is no more shocked at seeing a man a knave, unjust, or selfish, than at seeing vultures greedy for carnage, apes mischievous, or wolves mad with fury.

ALCESTE: Then I am to see myself deceived, torn to pieces, robbed without being— Heaven, I will say no more!

PHILINTE: Yes, you would do well to keep silent. Shout a little less loudly against your adversary, and give some of your care to your lawsuit.

ALCESTE: That I will not do. That matter is settled.

PHILINTE: To whom are you looking to plead for you?

ALCESTE: Whom? Reason, my just right, equity.

PHILINTE: Will you pay a visit to any of the judges?

ALCESTE: No; is my cause unjust or doubtful?

PHILINTE: No, your cause is just; but, on the other hand, intrigue is an awkward thing to tackle.

ALCESTE: No; I am resolved not to move a step in the matter. I am either right or wrong.

PHILINTE: Don't trust to that.

ALCESTE: I shall not stir.

PHILINTE: Your adversary is strong, and, by his secret practices, he may draw——

ALCESTE: Be it so. I shall see what comes of it. I shall see by this trial whether men have sufficient effrontery—whether they are wicked, villainous, and perverse enough to do me this injustice in the face of the whole world.

Philinte then asks Alceste if he finds this scrupulous integrity in Célimène, the lady of his affections, pointing out that either the sincere Eliante or the prude Arsinoë—both of whom look with favour on Alceste—would seem a more suitable choice, whereas Célimène's coquettish humour and malicious cleverness would appear to be too much akin to the manners of the time. Alceste, in reply, confesses his inconsistency in the matter, but pleads that Célimène makes him love her despite himself, and that his love for her will doubtless purify her heart. Then—as if to redress the balance—he nearly quarrels with another of Célimène's lovers, Ononte, because he cannot honestly praise the latter's verses, and has a stormy scene with Célimène herself, in which he reproaches her for encouraging the attentions of other admirers.

ACT II

[*Enter* ELIANTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE, CLITANDRE, PHILINTE, *and* ACASTE.

ELIANTE: Here are the two marquises coming up with us. Did any one tell you?

CÉLIMÈNE: Yes. (*To* ALCESTE) You have not gone?

ALCESTE: No; I am resolved, madame, that your heart shall declare either for them or for me.

CÉLIMÈNE: You are losing your senses!

ALCESTE: You must take one side or the other.

CLITANDRE: I have just come from the Louvre, madame, where Cléonte made himself appear absolutely ridiculous. Has he not got some friend who would be kind enough to enlighten him upon his manners?

CÉLIMÈNE: He certainly appears to poor advantage

in society. He carries himself everywhere with an air that leaps to the eye at once, and when you see him again after a short absence you find him more extraordinary than ever.

ACASTE: Talking of extraordinary people, I have just had to endure one of the most wearisome of them. That arguer, Damon, kept me, if you please, a full hour in the broiling sun out of my chair.

CÉLIMÈNE: He is a strange prattler. He has always got the knack of telling you nothing in a flood of words. There is not a grain of sense in what he says. You listen to nothing but noise.

ELIANTE: This beginning is not bad; the conversation takes a sufficiently kindly turn against our neighbours.

CLITANDRE: Timarte, too, madame, is a type worth noticing.

CÉLIMÈNE: From head to foot he is a complete mystery. When passing you, he casts a bewildered glance at you, and, without having anything to do, is always busy. Whatever he retails to you abounds in affectation; he overpowers everybody by his ceremonies. He is never tired of whispering a secret to you in order to interrupt a conversation, and that secret is nothing. Of the least trifle he makes a marvel, and whispers everything in your ear, even his "good-morning."

ACASTE: And Géralde, madame?

CÉLIMÈNE: Oh, that tedious story-teller! You never see him get off the subject of his nobleman. He always mixes with brilliant society, and never mentions anyone of lower rank than a duke, a prince, or a princess. Title turns his head; all his conversation is full of nothing but carriages, horses, and dogs. He speaks familiarly to people of the highest degree, and the word sir is never used by him.

CLITANDRE: He is said to be on the best of terms with Bélise.

CÉLIMÈNE: What a stupid woman she is! And what

poor company! When she comes to see me, I suffer martyrdom. One is in a continual state of perspiration to find out what to say to her, and the absolute barrenness of her remarks allows the conversation to drop every moment. In vain you try to break down her stupid silence by tackling the most commonplace subjects; even the fine weather, the rain, the heat and the cold are topics which are soon exhausted with her. Yet, notwithstanding this, she drags out her unendurable visits to an insufferable length, and though you ask what the time is and yawn a score of times, she stirs no more than a log of wood.

ACASTE: What do you think of Adraste?

CÉLIMÈNE: Oh! What extreme pride! He is a man puffed up with self-love. He thinks the court shows no proper appreciation of his merits, so he makes it his daily business to inveigh against it; and an office, a place, or a living cannot be bestowed on another, but he thinks an injustice has been done to himself.

CLITANDRE: But young Cléon, whom the best people now visit; what have you to say of him?

CÉLIMÈNE: That it is to his cook that he owes the honour; that it is to his table that people pay visits.

ELIANTE: He takes care to provide the most dainty food.

CÉLIMÈNE: Yes, but I do wish he would not serve up himself. His stupid person is a very unpleasant dish, which, to my taste, spoils every dinner he gives.

PHILINTE: His uncle Damis is highly esteemed. What do you say, madame?

CÉLIMÈNE: He is one of my friends.

PHILINTE: I find him a decent fellow, and sensible enough.

CÉLIMÈNE: Yes, but he wants to be too witty, and that makes me angry. He is always unnatural, and in all his talk you see that he is striving to say smart things. Since he took it into his head to be clever, he is so hard

to please that nothing suits his taste. He sees faults in everything that is written, and thinks that to give praise does not become a man of wit, that to find fault is a proof of intelligence, that only fools admire and laugh, and that, by not approving of anything in the literature of to-day, he shows his superiority to everyone else. Even in conversation he finds something to criticise; the talk is too trifling for him to deign to descend to, and, with his arms crossed, he looks down contemptuously from the height of his intellect upon all that is said.

ACASTE: Good! His very picture!

CLITANDRE: You are admirable at sketching people.

ALCESTE: Cheer up! Push on, my good friends and courtiers. You don't spare anyone. Everyone will have his turn. And yet, were any one of them to appear before your eyes, we should see you all making the most solemn protestations of being his servant.

CLITANDRE: Why find fault with us? If you are offended at what is said, you must address your reproach to the lady.

ALCESTE: No, indeed, it concerns you; for your approving smiles draw all these slanderous strokes from her, and her satirical disposition is continually fostered by the wretched incense of your flattery.

PHILINTE: But why do you take so deep an interest in these people? You would condemn them for the very things we blame in them.

CÉLIMÈNE: Would you have this gentleman adopt the common view? Must he not display everywhere the spirit of contradiction which he has received from Heaven? Other persons' sentiments can never please him; he always supports an opposite opinion. The honour of contradicting has so many charms for him that he often takes up arms against himself and combats his own true sentiments as soon as he discovers them on other persons' lips.

ALCESTE: The laughers are on your side, madame,

and that is saying everything: you can direct your satire against me.

PHILINTE: Your avowed surliness of disposition will not suffer persons to be either blamed or praised.

ALCESTE: It is because men are never reasonable that my surliness of disposition towards them is always seasonable. I see that in all matters they praise without discrimination and censure with rashness.

ACT III

[*Enter* CÉLIMÈNE *and* ARSINOË.

CÉLIMÈNE: Ah, madame, what happy fate brings you here? Truly I was becoming uneasy about you.

ARSINOË: I have come about some advice which I think I ought to give you.

CÉLIMÈNE: Shall we sit down?

ARSINOË: It is not necessary, madame. Friendship ought especially to show itself in those things which may be of the most consequence to us; and as there are none of more importance than those of honour and propriety, I come to prove my friendship by giving you a word of advice as regards your reputation. Yesterday I was with some people of singular virtue, and they turned their discourse on you. Unfortunately, your conduct and the gossip it provokes were far from being the subject of commendation. The crowd of persons whose visits you permit, your gallantry, and the reports it sets going, found censors more numerous than they deserved, and more severe than I could have wished. I did all I could to defend you. I pleaded the innocence of your intentions, and said I would vouch for the honesty of your heart. But you know there are things in life which one cannot excuse, although one would like to; and I was at last forced to admit that your fashion of living did you some harm, that in the eyes of the world it had an ugly look, and that there was no story, however ill-natured,

which was not in circulation everywhere about you. Not that I believe, at bottom, that virtue is in any way compromised. Madame, I believe that you are too sensible not to take this perhaps useful advice in the right spirit, and not to ascribe it to the secret promptings of a zeal that attaches me to all your interests.

CÉLIMÈNE: Madame, I have to return you many thanks; such advice puts me under an obligation. Far from taking it amiss, I desire instantly to acknowledge your kindness by giving you a word of advice as regards your reputation; and as I see you show yourself my friend by telling me the reports which are published about me, I shall follow, in my turn, so pleasing an example, and inform you of what is said about you. In a house the other day where I was paying a visit, I met some people of signal worth, who, speaking of the true concerns of a virtuous life, got the conversation round to you. There, your prudishness and outbursts of zeal were not mentioned as a very good example. Your affectation of a grave expression, your eternal talk about wisdom and reputation, your mincings and little shrieks at the shadow of impropriety which an innocent but ambiguous word might cast, that lofty esteem in which you hold yourself, those pitying looks which you throw on all, your frequent lectures, and your bitter censures on things which are innocent and pure, all this, if I may speak frankly, madame, was blessed by common consent. What is the good, said they, of this modest mien and this virtuous exterior which all the rest belies? She is exact in the last degree in saying her prayers, but she beats her servants, and does not pay them any wages. In every place of worship she displays great zeal, but she powders and wishes to appear beautiful. She has the nudities covered in her pictures, but delights in the realities. As for me, I undertook your defence against everyone, and strongly assured them this was nothing but slander. But the prevailing opinion went against me,

and the conclusion was that you would do well to have less concern about the actions of others, and to take a little more trouble about your own. Madame, I believe that you also are too sensible not to take this perhaps useful advice in the right spirit, and not to ascribe it to the secret promptings of a zeal which attaches me to all your interests.

ARSINGË: I did not expect this retort, madame, and by its bitter quality I see how my disinterested advice has wounded your feelings.

CÉLIMÈNE: On the contrary, madame; if we were wise, these mutual counsels would come into fashion. And frankly made use of, they would help to destroy that blindness of egoism which prevents us from seeing ourselves.

ARSINOË: Ah! madame, I can hear nothing said of you; it is in me that people find so much to blame.

CÉLIMÈNE: Madame, I fancy one can blame or praise everything, and that everyone may be right, according to age or taste. There is a season for gallantry; there is also one proper to prudishness. Out of policy, one may take up the latter when our youthful years are dead with all their bloom. I don't say that one day I shall not follow your example. Age brings everything, but twenty, as everybody knows, is not the time at which to act the prude.

ARSINOË: You certainly pride yourself upon a slight advantage, and brag terribly about your age. But I am at a loss to know why you should attack me in this strange way.

CÉLIMÈNE: And I, madame, am at a loss to know why you are to be seen attacking me so violently everywhere. Can I help it if men won't pay you attentions, and will fall in love with my beauty? You have a free field; I do not hinder you from having charms to attract people.

ARSINOË: And do you think one troubles oneself about these many lovers of whom you boast? Is it not quite

easy to judge at what a price they may be enlisted nowadays? Do you wish it to be believed that your merit alone attracts this crowd, that they are consumed merely with an honourable love for you and that they count your virtues? People are not blinded by these vain shifts. If my eyes envied the conquests made by yours, I think one might manage to do like other persons; one could easily be reckless, and one could soon show you that one has lovers when one wishes for them.

CÉLIMÈNE: Do have some, then, madame, and let us see how you manage the business; try to please by this wonderful way of yours, and without——

[*Enter* ALCESTE.

ARSINOË: Let us break off this sort of talk; it might put too severe a strain both on your temper and on mine. I should already have taken my informal leave had not the non-arrival of my carriage compelled me to wait.

CÉLIMÈNE: You can stay as long as you please, madame. But I am going to give you better company than my own. Alceste, I must go and write a line or two which I cannot delay without being rude. Please stay with this lady; she will be good enough readily to pardon my incivility. [*Exit.*

Left alone with Alceste, Arsinoë exercises her flatteries, and tells him how it vexes her to see nothing done for him by the court. Alceste replies that he has no claims to place or preferment, and that the very atmosphere of the court would choke him. Arsinoë then expresses her sympathy for him in his love affairs, assures him that Célimène is unworthy of him and false to him, and, when Alceste demands proofs in place of hints and innuendos, promises them in abundance if he will accompany her to her house. The result of this visit is seen in a frantic appeal subsequently made by Alceste to Eliante to avenge him on Célimène for her treachery by accepting his hand. But, though Eliante has never disguised her regard for Alceste, she is unwilling to accept him offhand and in those circumstances, and having been told that the proof of Célimène's faithlessness is a love-letter of hers in Alceste's possession, written to Oronte, she tells the latter's jealous rival that there may be some mistake, and that the wrong done him may not be so great as he supposes. This, indeed, proves to be the case, for when Alceste

goes to his mistress in a frenzy of rage, and accuses her of treachery, she disarms him by saying that the letter was written to a woman, rebukes him for his suspicions and mad jealousy, and almost convinces him that she is true to him. Célimène's love for Alceste is, however, to be submitted to a final and more searching proof. The misanthrope loses the lawsuit in which right has been so clearly on his side, and, in a passion of resentment, declares to Philinte his resolution to withdraw from all intercourse with the world. Philinte urges him to appeal against the judicial decision and to have the case re-tried. "No," says Alceste, "I shall abide by the decision. Whatever cruel injury such a verdict may inflict on me, I shall take good care not to have it quashed. One sees in this case too plainly how right is trampled on, and I wish it to go down to posterity as a signal proof, as a glaring evidence of the wickedness of the men of to-day. It may cost me twenty thousand francs, but at the cost of twenty thousand francs I shall have the right to inveigh against the iniquity of human nature, and to nourish an eternal hatred for it."

In this mood Alceste approaches Célimène to have a final understanding with her. He finds Ononte with her, and they are both urging her to make a definite choice between them, when Acaste and Clitandre, two marquises who have long dangled at Célimène's heels, appear to demand from the lady an explanation of a couple of letters which she has written. Acaste reads out one written to Clitandre mocking at Acaste, Ononte, and Alceste; and Clitandre reads out another written to Acaste abusing Clitandre. At this Ononte withdraws his offer to Célimène, the latter confesses to Alceste that she is in the wrong, and he offers to forgive her if she will marry him and withdraw with him from the world. But Célimène cannot in the end prevail upon herself to make such a renunciation, and Alceste, having made an unsuccessful offer of his hand to Eliante, who, however, agrees to marry Philinte, retires to seek out some secluded place on earth where he may be free and honest.

The School for Wives

Persons in the Play

ARNOLPHE, *otherwise* M. DE LA SOUCHE
AGNÈS, *a young girl brought up by Arnolphe*
HORACE, *the lover of Agnès*
CHRYSALDE, *Arnolphe's friend*
ENRIQUE, *Chrysalde's brother-in-law*
ORONTE, *Horace's father, Arnolphe's great friend*

The scene is laid in a town square.

ACT I

SCENE I.

[*Enter* CHRYSALDE *and* ARNOLPHE.

CHRYSALDE: Your plan makes me feel uneasy for you; however you look at the business, taking a wife is a distinctly risky affair in your case.

ARNOLPHE: True. Perhaps it is what you have in your own home that makes you fear for me.

CHRYSALDE: Chances of that sort one must take. I fear for you because of your habit of ridiculing poor husbands, from which so many hundreds have suffered. It is your greatest pleasure.

Few plays have excited a more violent literary war than Molière's "School for Wives" ("L'École des Femmes"), which was produced on December 26, 1662. Nevertheless, it is quite one of the best plays that came from his pen; it is witty and epigrammatic, and its satire on the whims and foibles of its time is merciless. "In pure comedy," says Mr. Frederic Harrison, "Molière has no superior, or none but Aristophanes. He is marked out by the wonderfully systematic and profound study that he devoted to every type of folly, affectation, hypocrisy, quackery, foppery, and grossness which beset his age."

ARNOLPHE: Quite true! Is there another town in the world which contains husbands as patient as they are here? As a spectator may I not laugh at them?

CHRYSALDE: Yes, but he who laughs at another ought to fear lest he be laughed at in his turn. No one has ever heard me delighting in the stories which are told in the houses I visit. I might condemn undue toleration on the part of husbands. I would not under any circumstances suffer what many of them suffer quite calmly; yet I have never dreamed of saying so. So if, as fate will have it, this sort of disgrace ever falls upon me, I am certain, after the way I have acted, that people would content themselves with laughing up their sleeves at me. But in your case, my dear friend, it is different. I tell you again, you are running a very awkward risk.

ARNOLPHE: Don't distress yourself, my friend. I know all the sharp tricks and subtle devices which women make use of to deceive us. Against this accident I have taken my precautions. The girl I am marrying has all the innocence required to preserve my honour from evil influences. I am marrying a fool to escape being fooled. It's a bad lookout to have a clever wife. I want mine to be completely ignorant. I shall be satisfied if she can say her prayers, love me, sew, and spin. Virtue is all I want.

CHRYSALDE: But, after all, how can you expect a stupid woman ever to know what it is to be virtuous? Besides, it must be very tedious, I should think, to have such a woman by one's side all one's life.

ARNOLPHE: Preach and prate till Whitsuntide, you won't convince me in the least.

CHRYSALDE: I won't say another word.

ARNOLPHE: Everyone must follow his own way. I'm rich enough, I think, to choose a partner who will owe all to me. A sweet and steadfast air caused me to love her above all other children when she was only four years old. The mother, a poor peasant woman, finding

herself weighed down by poverty, the idea came to me to adopt the child, and the good creature, when she learnt my wish, was quite ready to rid herself of her charge. In a little convent, far from the world, I had the little girl brought up on a plan of my own; that is to say, I told them what care they should take to make her as simple as possible. Thank God, success has crowned my endeavours! I found her so completely innocent that I blessed Heaven for having granted my wish and given me a wife who is exactly to my taste. I then took her away, and as my house is always open to hundreds of persons, and as one must always be on the lookout, I have kept her under lock and key in another house where no one comes to see me; so her naturally good disposition stands no chance of being spoiled. I ask you to sup with us to-night. I should like you to examine her, and to see whether my choice is to be condemned or not.

CHRYSALDE: I shall be very glad to do so, Seigneur Arnolphe.

ARNOLPHE: Why do you always call me by that name?

CHRYSALDE: It will come to my lips. I never remember Monsieur de la Souche. What on earth made you re-christen yourself at the age of forty-two?

ARNOLPHE: Well, my house is known by that name; moreover, La Souche pleases me better than Arnolphe.[1]

CHRYSALDE: Be it so. I will take care to accustom my lips to call you nothing but Monsieur de la Souche.

ARNOLPHE: Adieu. I shall call here just to say I have come back.

CHRYSALDE (*going away*): Upon my word, I believe he is an absolute fool.

ARNOLPHE: He is a little crazy on some matters.

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[1] St. Arnolphe was the patron saint of deceived husbands.

SCENE II.

[*Enter* HORACE *and* ARNOLPHE.

HORACE: Arnolphe!

ARNOLPHE: Eh! How glad I am to see you! How long have you been here?

HORACE: Nine days. I went straight to your house, but it was a fruitless visit.

ARNOLPHE: I have been in the country. But tell me, how is your father Oronte? We have not seen one another for nearly four years.

HORACE: Nor, I believe, written, which is worse. He is much more hearty than you or I, Seigneur Arnolphe. I have a letter for you from him, but he has since told me in another letter that he is coming here. Do you know who that fellow-citizen of yours can be who is coming back to these parts with a fortune he has made in America in fourteen years?

ARNOLPHE: No. Have you heard his name?

HORACE: Enrique.

ARNOLPHE: No.

HORACE: My father speaks of him and of his return as though I ought to know all about him. He writes me that they are meeting one another on some important business.

ARNOLPHE: I shall certainly be very pleased to see him, and I will do my best to entertain him. (*After having read the letter*) Even if he had not taken the trouble to write to me, you were quite welcome to avail yourself of any means I possess.

HORACE: I am a man who takes persons at their word, and just now I am in need of a hundred pistoles.

ARNOLPHE: Well, you oblige me by making use of me in this way. I am glad I have the money on me. Keep the purse also. How do you like this town?

HORACE: It seems to be well populated and to have splendid buildings; I should think its amusements are wonderful too.

ARNOLPHE: Everyone can find pleasures to suit his taste; but those whom one christens gallants have every reason to be content with the country, for the women are born coquettes. Both the blondes and the brunettes have the same charming disposition, and the husbands, too, are the most easy-going in the world. Have you had any success as yet?

HORACE: I will confess to you quite frankly that my heart has been captured by a beauty here. My little attentions met with so much success from the first that she very kindly welcomed me to the house, and, without boasting too much or doing her any injury, I may claim that the affair is going very well with me.

ARNOLPHE (*laughing*): And who is she?

HORACE (*pointing to the house*): A young girl who lives in that red house over there. She is simple in all conscience, thanks to the unexampled folly of a man who thus hides her from all intercourse with the world. But, despite the ignorance in which she is being enslaved, she has many shining and enthralling charms, and a manner indescribably gentle and engaging, against which the heart is quite defenceless. But perhaps you know her; this young star of love, this casket of charms, is called Agnès.

ARNOLPHE (*aside*): Ah! I shall betray myself!

HORACE: As for the man, I think he is called Zouss or Source. From what I hear, he is rich, but he certainly lacks sense. Do you know him?

ARNOLPHE (*aside*): What a bitter pill!

HORACE: Why don't you speak?

ARNOLPHE: Oh! yes, I know him.

HORACE: He is a fool, is he not?

ARNOLPHE: Eh——

HORACE: You mean yes. A fool and ridiculously jealous! I see it is exactly as I was told. Agnès is a charming jewel; it would be a sin to leave so pure a beauty in the power of that strange fellow. All my ef-

forts, all my dearest wishes are to gain her. The money I have just borrowed so freely from you is to enable me to accomplish this noble undertaking. You seem distressed; can it really be that you disapprove of the design I have planned?

ARNOLPHE: No, I was only thinking.

HORACE: The conversation wearies you. Good-bye. I will call on you very soon to thank you. You will keep my secret. [*Exit.*

ARNOLPHE: I feel——

HORACE (*returning*): Above all, from my father—he perhaps might be angry about it. [*Exit.*

ARNOLPHE: Oh! what I have suffered during this conversation! Never was a man so troubled. With what imprudence and with what extreme haste did he come to tell me this affair! Did any blunderer ever show himself madder? Yet, after suffering so much, I ought to have controlled myself until I had found out whether I had reason for my fears. I tremble to think of the misery which may come to me, for one often seeks more than one wishes to find. [*Exit.*

ACT II

[*Enter* AGNÈS *and* ARNOLPHE.

AGNÈS *has told* ARNOLPHE *that during his absence a handsome young man,* i.e., HORACE, *gained access to the house, swore he loved her better than anyone else had ever been loved, and said the prettiest things imaginable to her, things which thrilled her with pleasure.* ARNOLPHE *warns her that to receive such attentions is a mortal sin, and orders her the next time the young man calls to slam the door in his face, and if he knocks to throw stones at him from her window.*

ARNOLPHE (*seated*): I am going to marry you, Agnès, and a hundred times a day you ought to bless your lucky

fate to contemplate the low estate from which you sprang, and at the same time to admire my goodness, which, from the mean condition of a poor village girl, has raised you to the rank of a worthy citizen's wife. Marriage, Agnès, is no laughing matter, and you must understand that you are not raised to this position in order that you may be giddy, and have a good time. Your sex's business in this union is to be dependent; all authority is on the side of the beard. Beware of imitating those wicked coquettes about whose goings-on the whole city chatters, and don't let yourself yield to the attacks of the evil one. I mean, be deaf to the overtures of any young coxcomb. It is my honour, Agnès, that I leave with you, and this honour is delicate and easily wounded. Remember that in hell there are boiling cauldrons into which they throw wives who have led wicked lives—from which may Heaven preserve you. I have here in my pocket an important work which will teach you the duties of a wife. (*He gets up*) Come, let us now see if you can read it at all well.

AGNÈS (*reading*):

THE MAXIMS OF MARRIAGE,
OR
THE DUTIES OF THE MARRIED WOMAN,
WITH HER DAILY LESSONS.

First Maxim: She who enters into the honourable state of matrimony ought always to bear in mind, in spite of the way the world wags nowadays, that the husband who takes her takes her only for himself.

[AGNÈS *goes on.*

Second Maxim: She must dress herself only in the way the husband who possesses her approves; the care of her beauty concerns him alone. It is of no account whatever that other persons find her ugly.

Third Maxim: The study of tender glances, washes,

paint, pomades, and the thousand ingredients that give colour to the cheeks—all these she must put far from her. These are drugs which bring death to honour, and it is but seldom that pains to appear beautiful are taken for the sake of the husband.

Fourth Maxim: When she goes out, she must, if she would be a virtuous woman, hide under her hood the killing glances of her eyes; for if she would best please her husband, she ought not to please anybody else.

Fifth Maxim: Good form forbids her to receive any other soul than those who come to visit her husband; those who are of a gallant disposition, and have business only with madame, are not welcomed by monsieur.

Sixth Maxim: She must on no account allow herself to take presents from men, for in the age in which we live nothing is given for nothing.

Seventh Maxim: She ought not to have among her belongings desk, ink, paper, or pens; it is the proper thing for the husband to write all that is written in his house.

Eighth Maxim: Those unseemly meetings called fashionable assemblies always corrupt the minds of women. As a matter of policy they ought to be forbidden, for it is there that conspiracies are planned against poor husbands.

Ninth Maxim: Every woman who wishes to dedicate herself to virtue ought to avoid high playing as she would the plague; for play is very deceiving, and often induces a woman to stake her last possession.

Tenth Maxim: She should not be seen in public promenades or at picnics, for wise heads say that in these sort of reckonings the husband is always the one who pays.

Eleventh Maxim: She——

ARNOLPHE: You shall finish by yourself, and very soon I will explain these things to you properly, step by step. (*Exit* AGNÈS.) I cannot do better than make her my wife. I shall mould her character just as I wish.

She is like a piece of wax in my hands, and I shall be able to give her the form that pleases me. That young idiot Horace shall have no occasion for laughing at me. Thanks to his trick of chattering, he has met with his deserts. But here he comes. I must pretend a little, and try to find out whether he is much annoyed or not. (*Enter* HORACE.) Tell me how your love affairs are going on, Seigneur Horace. I admire the rapidity of your first attempts, and I am interested in the issue.

HORACE: Cruel fortune has brought back from the country my fair one's guardian, and further, to my great regret, he has learned of the secret intercourse between us. So, when I was going to pay my usual visit, the maid and valet stopped my entry, and slammed the door in my face; while Agnès, from the window, sent me off in a very angry voice, and threw a stone at me.

ARNOLPHE: I am afraid you are in a bad way, but you will find means to set matters right.

HORACE: I must try by some scheme to defeat that jealous fellow's unsleeping vigilance.

ARNOLPHE: You ought to find that easy; and, after all, the girl loves you.

HORACE: Certainly.

ARNOLPHE: The stone put you to flight; but it ought not to have surprised you.

HORACE: Of course. I understood at once that my rival was there, conducting the whole affair without being seen. But what surprised me, and what will surprise you, is another incident of which you shall hear, a bold stroke which that young beauty made, and which one would not have expected from a girl of her simplicity. It must be confessed that love is a great teacher: it teaches us to be what we never were before; and by its lessons a complete change in our manners is often the work of a moment. It conquers obstacles in our very nature, and its sudden effects have the appearance of mira-

cles. A miracle is very evident in Agnès for dismissing me in these definite terms: "Go away; I know all you have got to say, and there is my reply." This stone fell at my feet with a letter attached. Does not love know the art of sharpening wits? Don't you find it amusing to watch the part my jealous rival is playing throughout this game? You don't laugh enough at it, to my thinking.

ARNOLPHE (*with a forced laugh*): Pardon me, I am laughing as heartily as I can.

HORACE: As to her letter, her hand has put on paper all that her heart dictated, and in terms so moving and full of good feeling, so innocently tender and ingenuous, as to represent in short all that an unspoiled nature would feel on receiving love's first wound.

ARNOLPHE: Good-bye.

HORACE: Why such haste?

ARNOLPHE: I have just remembered some pressing business.

HORACE: But don't you know anyone who could gain access to that house? Cannot you devise some means of helping me?

ARNOLPHE: No, really; you will find a way without me.

HORACE: Good-bye, then. You see how I trust you.

[*Exit.*

ARNOLPHE: I have to hide my feelings before him. And what pain it is to conceal my bitter grief! That wretched letter will be the death of me. I see that the traitor has stolen away her affections. The despair of it all!

ACT III

SCENE I.—ARNOLPHE, *having been told by* HORACE *that he means to climb at night to* AGNÈS'S *chamber, has bidden his servants lie in wait to club the intruder. Judging, however, from their subsequent accounts*

of the incident that HORACE *has been beaten to death, he is considerably worried until he meets his young rival, who, after informing him that the servants' blows had merely caused him to miss his footing on the ladder and to fall to the ground, and that as he lay there Agnès ran up and offered to elope with him, confides that young lady, all unsuspectingly, to* ARNOLPHE'S *temporary protection.*

[*Enter* ARNOLPHE *and* AGNÈS.

ARNOLPHE (*his face hidden in his cloak*): Come, I am not thinking of lodging you here. I mean to put you in a safe place. Do you know me?

AGNÈS (*recognising him*): Ah!

ARNOLPHE: You minx, my face frightens you now. (AGNÈS *looks to see if she can any longer see* HORACE) Don't look to your lover for aid; he is too far away to assist you now. Ah, you wretch, to think of such perfidy! After all my kindness to you, to form such a design!

AGNÈS: Why do you scold me?

ARNOLPHE: Is it not an infamous action to go off with a lover?

AGNÈS: But he told me he wanted to make me his wife.

ARNOLPHE: But *I* intended to take you for my wife.

AGNÈS: But, to tell you frankly, he is more to my taste as a husband than you are.

ARNOLPHE: That is because you love him, you traitress!

AGNÈS: Yes, I love him.

ARNOLPHE: You should have dismissed such an amorous desire.

AGNÈS: How can one dismiss what gives pleasure?

ARNOLPHE: Did you not know that it would displease me?

AGNÈS: I? Not at all. What harm can it do you?

ARNOLPHE: Why don't you love me, Madame Impudence?

AGNÈS: Good heavens! You ought not to blame me. Why did you not make love as he did?

ARNOLPHE: I have done everything in my power; but the pains I have taken are all lost.

AGNÈS: Really, then he knows more about it than you do; for it did not bother him to make love.

ARNOLPHE: Look how the hussy reasons and answers! Is it nothing to have had the care of you from your infancy?

AGNÈS: Do you think I am proud of that; or, indeed, that I am not quite aware that I am stupid? I am ashamed of it, and, if I can help it, I will not pass for a fool any longer at my age.

ARNOLPHE: You want to learn something from your young coxcomb, cost what it may?

AGNÈS: Certainly. It is from him that I have learned what I know. And I think I owe much more to him than to you.

ARNOLPHE: I don't know what prevents me from repaying you for this talk with a good slap.

AGNÈS: Ah! You can give me one, if it will please you.

ARNOLPHE: Her words and her looks disarm my anger, and produce a tenderness of heart that blots out the blackness of her deed. What a strange thing love is, that men should be subject to such weakness for the sake of such traitresses! Come, my little traitress, I pardon you and hand you back my love. Seeing me so good, love me in return.

AGNÈS: I would please you to the best of my power. What would it cost me to do so?

ARNOLPHE: Only listen to this loving sigh, witness this dying look, study my appearance, and leave that fop and the love he gives you. I will caress you ceaselessly

night and day. I will fondle you, kiss you, eat you. You shall behave just as you like. I will give you any proof you wish of my love. I will weep, beat myself, tear my hair, kill myself.

AGNÈS: Stay, nothing you say touches my heart. Horace could do more in two words than you.

ARNOLPHE: You brave me too much. I will follow my own plan, you stupid, stubborn creature. A far-off convent shall avenge everything. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—HORACE, *having learned that his father,* ORONTE, *has arrived in the town to marry him to a daughter of* ENRIQUE, *beseeches* ARNOLPHE *to say nothing of his engagement, and to try to prevent the new project of marriage from being carried out.* ARNOLPHE *readily agrees, but when he meets* ORONTE, ENRIQUE, *and* CHRYSALDE, *instead of keeping his promise, he tells of* HORACE'S *engagement, and urges* ORONTE *to use all the authority of a father in marrying his son to* ENRIQUE'S *daughter.* CHRYSALDE *expresses his surprise at the line* ARNOLPHE *takes up, and having by chance alluded to him as Monsieur de la Souche, thereby enables* HORACE, *who has overheard the name, to see matters in their true light.*

[*Enter* AGNÈS, ARNOLPHE, ENRIQUE, HORACE, ORONTE, *and* CHRYSALDE.

ARNOLPHE: Come, my fair one, come. Here is your lover. Make him a lowly and sweet reverence as some recompense for his defeat.

AGNÈS: Will you let me be taken away in this manner, Horace?

HORACE: I don't know where I am, my grief is so great!

ORONTE: Tell us what all this mystery is about.

ARNOLPHE: When I have more leisure I will tell you.

For the present, good-bye. I have advised you to bring about the marriage, despite all his murmuring.

ORONTE: Yes; but if you have been told everything, have you not been told that you have in your house the girl in question, the daughter of the charming Angélique and of Seigneur Enrique by their secret union?

CHRYSALDE: By a secret marriage my sister had a daughter whose fate was hidden from all the family.

ORONTE: And who was put out to nurse in the country by the father, under an assumed name, so that nothing might be discovered.

CHRYSALDE: About that time fate declared war against him, and forced him to leave his native land and to undergo a thousand different perils in distant lands beyond the seas, where his assiduity gained for him that which imposture and envy had robbed him of in his own country.

ORONTE: Upon his return to France he immediately sought out the woman to whom he had confided the fate of his daughter. This country-woman frankly confessed that she had placed the child in your hands when she was four years old, and that she had done so because she was oppressed by extreme poverty.

CHRYSALDE: Full of joy and light of heart, he has brought the woman to this place; and you will soon see her here to clear up this mystery before the eyes of all. I can nearly imagine what you suffer. But fate in this matter is really kind to you. If you think it so great a happiness not to be a deceived husband, the best thing is not to marry.

ARNOLPHE (*going off, overcome with rage*): Oh!

ORONTE: Why does he rush off without saying anything?

HORACE: Ah! my father, chance has here brought about what your wisdom had premeditated. By the sweet ties of mutual love I had already engaged myself to this charming girl.

ENRIQUE: As soon as I saw her I made no doubt who she was.

CHRYSALDE: Let us go into the house to unravel these mysteries; let us pay our friend his due for the care he has taken of Agnès, and return thanks to Heaven, which does everything for the best. [*Exeunt.*

Tartuffe

Persons in the Drama

ORGON
ELMIRE, *his second wife*
DAMIS, *Orgon's son (by his first wife)*
MARIANE, *Orgon's daughter (by his first wife)*
VALÈRE, *Mariane's lover*
DORINE, *Mariane's maid*
CLÉANTE, *Orgon's brother-in-law*
TARTUFFE.

ACT I

SCENE.—*A room in* ORGON'S *house at Paris. As* DORINE *is talking to* CLÉANTE, ORGON *enters.*

ORGON: How do you do, Cléante? How has everybody been getting on while I was away?

DORINE: Madame Elmire has had a very bad headache.

ORGON: And Tartuffe?

DORINE: He is wonderfully well. The great, fat,

"Tartuffe," produced in 1667, is acknowledged to be Molière's masterpiece. In it, under the pretext of attacking religious hypocrisy, Molière bitterly satirises the puritanical Jansenists and the worldly Jesuits. Had he not been strongly backed by Louis XIV., the great playwright would certainly have been persecuted, and probably put to death.

pious man ate two partridges and the best part of a leg of mutton for supper.

ORGON: The poor fellow!

CLÉANTE: I can't understand what you see in the man.

ORGON: My dear brother, you ought really to become acquainted with him. You would be as charmed with him as I am. He would bring peace into your soul, and teach you to contemn all earthly things. He has detached my heart from all the vain illusions of this vale of tears. I could now see my wife and children die without the least grief.

CLÉANTE: What kindly human feelings!

ORGON: If you had made the acquaintance of Tartuffe in the same way as I did, you would have the same affection for him. Every day he came to church and knelt down close to me, and attracted the attention of the whole congregation by the ardour with which he prayed. Ah, if you had seen his sighs and his heavenly transports! Finding out how poor he was, I made him some gifts, but he always wished to return half of what I offered; and as I refused to take anything back, he used to share all that I gave him with the beggars at the church door. Ever since I brought him to live with me, all things have gone well. He is more jealous of my good name than I am myself, and he is now zealously trying to convert my wife to his own holy way of living.

CLÉANTE: Have you gone clean mad? Can't you see that the fellow is an utter hypocrite?

ORGON: I can see that you are an ungodly wretch! Unless you repent, my brother, and repent quickly, I shall have nothing more to do with you. You are a lost soul. (*He strides out of the room, but* CLÉANTE *holds him back.*)

CLÉANTE: One word, Orgon. I did not come to talk about Tartuffe, but about Valère. Why have you postponed the marriage between him and Mariane? You have given your word; are you now going to break it?

ORGON (*showing him out*): I can conduct my own affairs without your interference. My daughter has a soul to save, and Heaven has given me the means of saving it.

CLÉANTE: But what shall I say to Valère? That you have gone back on your word?

ORGON (*pushing his brother out of the room*): Say to him whatever you please, but go. Mariane! Mariane!

[CLÉANTE *departs.* MARIANE *enters.*

MARIANE: Yes, father.

ORGON: My dear daughter, I know your sweet and gentle nature, and I love you for it, and I wish to keep you always good and innocent.

MARIANE: You have always been very kind to me, father; kinder than I deserve.

ORGON: It is true I have promised you in marriage to Valère, but I notice that he does not go very often to church, and I am afraid that he is an irreligious man. Praise be to God, I have found somebody more worthy of you!

MARIANE (*pale and terrified*): You—you——

ORGON: What is the matter?

MARIANE (*recovering herself with an effort*): You know who has won my heart, father, and whom it is I hope to marry.

ORGON: Yes; Tartuffe!

MARIANE: It is not true, father, it is not true!

ORGON: It is God's own truth, girl. If needs be, I shall save your soul in spite of yourself. A marriage between you and Tartuffe will be the salvation of all our family. Neither Elmire nor Damis will then be able to resist following his noble example, and I shall at last become the head of a pious, sober, and godly household.

MARIANE (*crying*): But, father, father, I would rather enter a convent!

ORGON: You will stay here and marry Tartuffe. I am absolutely resolved upon it. Enough! I shall grow

angry if I listen to you any longer, and anger is a sin, as our godly guest is always impressing on me. I will go and take the air and calm my mind. [*He goes out.*

MARIANE: That fat, red-faced, gluttonous animal! I will die first. Dorine! Dorine!

[DORINE *enters.*

DORINE: I have been listening. Your father has gone mad!

MARIANE: Don't stand there laughing like an idiot. Run as fast as you can to Valère's house and tell him I want to see him at once.

ACT II

SCENE.—*The same room in* ORGON'S *house.* DAMIS *is stamping up and down, and* DORINE *is trying to quieten him.*

DAMIS: If this goes on much longer I will kill the scoundrel. I am treated like a dog now in my own father's house.

DORINE: If you really want to get rid of him, leave everything to your pretty stepmother. She is on our side, and she seems to be the only person who has any influence over him. If you aren't quiet you will spoil everything. She has arranged to meet him in this room, and see what he intends doing in regard to Mariane. Oh dear! here he comes. Get behind that curtain. [DAMIS *does so just as* TARTUFFE *enters rubbing his fat hands; seeing* DORINE *he turns and shouts to his servant in the corridor.*

TARTUFFE: Laurence! Put my hair-shirt away with my scourge, and pray Heaven to enlighten your heart. If anyone comes to see me, I am going to the prisoners to share with them the alms I have received.

DORINE (*aside*): He even tries to keep it up before

me! (*aloud*) If you please, Madame Elmire desires to have a talk with you in this room.

TARTUFFE: Is she coming soon?

DORINE: I think I hear her. Yes, here she is. I will leave you together.

[ELMIRE *enters.* DORINE *departs.*

TARTUFFE: May Heaven, madame, graciously bestow upon you health of both body and soul. Has your feverish headache gone?

ELMIRE (*sitting down*): I am now quite well, thank you.

TARTUFFE (*sitting beside her*): I have been praying all day long for Heaven to cure you. And oh, how sweet it is for me to be at last alone with you! How often have I begged in my prayers to be granted this opportunity!

ELMIRE: No doubt, you are concerned for my salvation, as well as for my husband's.

TARTUFFE (*taking her hand*): Oh, if you could only guess what an interest I take in you!

ELMIRE: You squeeze my hand too hard! Now, I want to talk seriously to you. I hear that my husband wishes to give you his daughter in marriage. Is this really so?

TARTUFFE: He has said something about it; but to speak truly, my dear lady, that is not the happiness for which I long.

ELMIRE: Oh, a very religious man like you has no thought of earthly joys!

TARTUFFE: Believe me, my heart is not made of stone. I am a man, and I feel like a man. Oh, you perfect creature, how could I see you without admiring in you the author of nature? I love you, and I cannot help loving you!

ELMIRE (*laughing*): Oh dear, what would my husband say if he heard you!

DAMIS (*springing from behind the curtain*): Now,

madame, we can confound this villain! I have been listening behind the curtain, so both of us can testify against him. Joy! he arrives just in time.

[ORGON *enters.*

ORGON: Whatever is the matter?

DAMIS: I have just surprised this pious man in the act of making love to your wife.

ELMIRE: Yes, it is true. But I am sorry, my dear husband, that Damis should have interfered. I am able to look after myself. [*She goes out.*

ORGON: I cannot believe it! The thing is impossible.

TARTUFFE: My dear brother, I am a miserable sinner, and if it is the wish of Heaven that I should be now punished, I am ready to submit to the mortification. Believe what is said against me! Hunt me like a criminal from your house! My life is full of iniquities, and I humbly confess that no man can charge me with more crimes than I daily accuse myself of.

ORGON (*to his son*): How dare you slander this saint-like, humble-minded man?

TARTUFFE: No, let him speak on! You go too much, my brother, by appearances. (*To* DAMIS) Speak, my dear son, speak! Call me a liar, a thief, a murderer. I will not contradict you. Let me on my knees endure all this ignominy as a punishment for the sins of my life.

ORGON (*to* DAMIS): You scoundrel! I shall at once disinherit you. Out of my house!

TARTUFFE: Forgive him, brother, forgive him. On my two knees I plead with you to forgive him.

ORGON (*lifting him up and speaking to his son*): Are you not moved, you scoundrel, by his extraordinary goodness?

TARTUFFE (*rising to his feet*): No. It is I who must depart. Now that the shadow of scandal rests on this godly household, I must in your own interests, my brother, hasten away.

ORGON: No, no! You are more to me than wife and children. You shall become my son-in-law, and I will make you my sole heir.

ACT III

SCENE.—*The same room in* ORGON'S *house.* DORINE *and* MARIANE *are talking;* ELMIRE *enters.*

DORINE (*to* ELMIRE): For pity's sake, madame, come to the help of Mariane! Your husband has resolved to marry her to Tartuffe this evening. She will kill herself rather than submit to such an outrage.

[ORGON *enters with a document.*

ORGON: Here is the marriage contract, Mariane. Read it, and you will see that I am asking no more from you than I am willing to do myself. I am surrendering this house and all my estate to Tartuffe. He shall no longer be my guest: I will be his.

MARIANE (*throwing herself at his feet*): Your kindnesses to him do not hurt me, father. If all your property is not enough for him, give him mine also. Only let me end my life in a convent; that is all that I now ask you.

ORGON: What! You wish to be a nun! Just because I go against your idle fancy! Get up at once. If you were really religious-minded you would be ready to mortify yourself by carrying out your father's wishes.

ELMIRE (*to* ORGON): I really don't know what to say. It is certain there are none so blind as those who will not see. After the scene here this morning——

ORGON: My rascal of a son was always a favourite of yours, and you had not the courage to disavow the vile trick he tried to play on the poor, simple, pious man. But I saw through it at once. You were too quiet and unmoved. If it had really been true I should have seen by your face how upset you were.

ELMIRE: Do you think I should be disturbed if a man like that tried to make love to me? My dear husband, it only made me laugh! Suppose I prove to you now that your son was speaking the truth? And I will! Dorine, tell Tartuffe that I want to see him here at once alone.

DORINE: He is very cunning. I am afraid he will not let you outwit him again.

ELMIRE: A man in love is always easily outwitted. Go and give him my message. (*To* ORGON) Get underneath this table.

ORGON: Why?

ELMIRE: It is necessary that you should hear but not be seen. Get underneath the table, I say.

ORGON (*as he does so*): I am ashamed of myself. It is not honourable, Elmire.

ELMIRE: Be quiet—here he comes.

[TARTUFFE *enters.*

TARTUFFE: I was told that you wished to speak to me again.

ELMIRE: Yes; but we must not be surprised this time. Will you make sure that no one is listening?

[TARTUFFE *opens the door, peeps round, and then locks it, while* ELMIRE *lifts up the curtain in the corner, and pretends to search the room thoroughly.*

ELMIRE: I am afraid of Damis. It was weak of me this morning not to try to brave it out as you did, but I hadn't the courage. Besides, I was angry with you for thinking of marrying my stepdaughter. You don't know how jealous you made me.

TARTUFFE: I must confess that I was beginning to believe that you were only feigning an interest in me in order to get me to break off a very advantageous alliance. Do you know that your fool of a husband is going to settle on me everything that he has? I shall then be master of the situation, and if you really love me——

ELMIRE (*starting up*): I thought I heard a step. Look, I beseech you, if my husband is not in the corridor!

TARTUFFE: There is no need to trouble about him. I have got him now so that I can lead him by the nose wherever I will. As you have seen, he will not, where it is a question of me, believe the evidence of his own eyes.

ELMIRE: Still, just go out for a minute, and look round carefully.

[TARTUFFE *goes out.* ORGON *comes from under the table.*

ORGON: What an abominable man!

ELMIRE: Surely you do not believe all that you hear! Remember how you treated Damis.

ORGON: Nothing so wicked ever came out of the infernal regions.

ELMIRE: But the man has not even yet kissed me. Won't you let me lead him on a little further? Aren't you afraid of condemning him on too slight a ground?

[*As* TARTUFFE *returns* ELMIRE *makes* ORGON *get behind her.*

TARTUFFE: There is no danger, dear lady, of any one interrupting us. I have carefully examined every room on this floor. Oh, if you only knew how I adore you——

[*As* TARTUFFE *speaks, he comes forward, opening his arms to embrace* ELMIRE; *but she steps aside, leaving him face to face with* ORGON.

ORGON (*stopping him*): You vile hypocrite! You cannot deceive me any longer. I have turned my son out of doors for you, broken off the marriage arranged for my daughter, and offered you her hand and all my estate, and yet you are not contented!

TARTUFFE: But, my dear brother, you do not believe——

ORGON: Out with you, you hypocrite!

TARTUFFE: You do not understand, my brother. I was only——

ORGON: Do you want me to murder you?

[CLÉANTE, MARIANE, VALÈRE, DAMIS, *and* DORINE *enter.* CLÉANTE *seizes* ORGON'S *arm, as he is about to strike* TARTUFFE, *and allows the villain to escape.*

CLÉANTE: Do not lower yourself, my brother, by striking the wretch. Leave the miserable creature to his fate. Perhaps his misfortunes will make a better man of him.

ORGON: Yes; I must end this day happily. Mariane, prepare for your marriage with Valère. It shall take place this evening.

NIBELUNGENLIED

Siegfried and Kriemhilda

To us in olden legends is many a marvel told
Of praise-deserving heroes, of labours manifold,
Of weeping and of wailing, of joy and festival;
Ye shall of bold knights' battling now hear a wondrous tale.

A very noble maiden grew up in Burgundy;
Than hers no greater beauty in any land might be:
The maid was called Kriemhilda[1]—a woman passing fair—
For whose sake many a warrior his life must needs forbear.

This beautiful maiden was the ward of her three brothers, noble and wealthy kings, whose country was Burgundy. They were Gunther, Gernot, and the youthful Giselher. Many lords were their vassals, and all Etzel's land rang with the fame of their deeds of might and valour. They dwelt at Worms by the Rhine, with

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In the year 1757 the Swiss Professor Bodmer printed an ancient, poetical manuscript, under the title of "Chriemhilde's Revenge and the Lament" ("Chriemilden Rache und die Klage"). This may be considered the first of a stream of publications and speculations still rolling on, with increased volume, to the present hour. Next, after Bodmer's publication C. H. Myller undertook a "Collection of German Poems from the Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Centuries," wherein, among other articles, he reprinted Bodmer's "Chriemhilde" and "Klage," with a highly remarkable addition prefixed to the former, essential indeed to the right understanding of it. The whole now stood before the world as one poem, under the name of the "Nibelungenlied," or "Lay of the Nibelungen." This wonderfully romantic early Teutonic poem exists in about twenty ancient manuscripts. It shows that the Germans, as well as the Greeks and the Celts and the Hindus, have their Heroic Age, with a world of demi-gods and marvels. It is a great Northern Epos, a German Iliad, and after six centuries of neglect it has taken undisputed place among the classic books of German literature. Many renderings into modern German

[1] Or Kriemhild.

honourable service throughout their earthly life; but they came to a mournful end through the strife of two great ladies.

Their mother was Dame Uté, a queen exceeding rich,
And Dankrat was their father, broad lands he left to each.
When he this life departed, he was a mighty man,
Who, e'en while yet a stripling, his mighty deeds began.

Among the strong and bold knights of these three overlords were Hagen of Tronjé, his brother Dankwart, the swift-footed, Ortwein of Metz, the two Margraves, Eckewart and Gere, the powerful Volker of Alsatia, Rumolt the kitchen master, a redoubtable knight, and Sindold and Hunold, masters of the ceremonies at court.

Meanwhile, amid this splendour, the maid Kriemhilda dreamed
That she had reared a falcon—strong, fair, and wild he seemed—
And that two eagles rent him before her very eyes:
No worse grief could life bring her in any evil guise.

Quick to her mother Uté she told the vision dread,
Who after her own manner the dream interpreted:
"This falcon of thy rearing, thy noble husband he,
And now may God defend him, or he is lost to thee!"

"What sayest thou of husbands, O dearest mother mine?
Never for hero's wooing shall I, your daughter, pine!
Spotless and fair would I be, as now, unto my death;
I would forego the sorrow that lurks man's love beneath."

But the maiden's mother exhorted her not to be so sure. And though for many a merry day Kriemhilda lived in happy freedom, yet it was her destiny one day to wed a gallant warrior, and that self-same falcon of her dream was he. Terrible was her vengeance on those who rent him.

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have appeared, as well as metrical and prose translations in English. The origin of the mythus of the "Lied" dates back to wilder Norse sagas, which inspired Wagner's "Nibelungen Ring" (see p. 305), with which it is interesting to compare it. But in the "Lied" the mythological shadows of the sagas are largely eliminated, and the prominent feature is the emerging of the ethical element, showing how inexorably doom follows sin. The following version has been prepared from the German.

In Netherland was growing a rich king's son and heir,
Whose father's name was Siegmund, Sieglind his mother fair.
In a strong castle lived they, of far and wide-spread fame,
Beside the great Rhine river; and Santen was its name.

That prince's name was Siegfried, a gallant knight and good,
In many kingdoms proved he his great and war-like mood;
So great his strength of body, he rode from land to land.
Ha! what fine warriors found he on the Burgundian strand!

The young hero, carefully trained, and of the noblest disposition, at length grew stalwart enough to bear weapons. Then he turned his thoughts to women, and dreamt of a fair bride. So Siegmund, his father, summoned all his liegemen to a grand festival in the castle hall. Rich apparel was given to four hundred sworded knights, and, first, mass was sung and honour was given to God. Then the time sped merrily in sports. Horses were saddled, and in the tournament many lances were splintered and shafts broken. Minstrels sang for gold, and were handsomely rewarded. The King enfeoffed Siegried with lands and castles, as in his youth he had been endowed by his sire. The festival lasted a week, and ended gloriously.

The Prince was little troubled by pangs of heartache yet.
The people's talk, however, ere long his ears beset:
How there was in Burgundia a maiden passing fair;
For her sake joy and sorrow thereafter he did bear.

The beauty of this maiden was famed far and wide;
Her lofty mind was vaulted, excelled her beauty's pride,
And brought her many a wooer, riding to Gunther's land,
Who fain would see the damsel, and bid for that fair hand.

And yet, however many contended for her love,
Kriemhilda felt in secret that none her heart could move;
There was no man among them whose love she could reward:
That knight was still a stranger, who was to be her lord.

But when the son of Siegling to lofty love inclined,
Compared with his, all wooing was an idle wind!
Right well, in sooth, deserved he to win so fair a bride:
Ere long the noble Kriemhilda stood at bold Siegfried's side.

His followers and kinsmen, seeing that he would wed,
Did counsel that the maiden he to the altar led
Should be by birth his equal—for his and for their sake:
"Then," cried the gallant Siegfried, "Kriemhilda will I take!"

Siegmund approved of his son's choice, and offered to send a strong force of his liegemen with Siegfried to Worms for his protection when he should go to claim the maiden as his wife, for well he knew that Gunther and Gernot had fierce followers, and that the life of the suitor might be in peril. But the youthful knight refused to ride with an army to gain his bride. He consented to take only a retinue of twelve good knights. So the fearless band set out, and on the seventh morning drew near to Worms on the Rhine. Hearing of the approach of strangers, King Gunther summoned Hagen with his vassals for information concerning these strange knights.

Hagen, after looking from the window at the splendid cavalcade, declared that though he never saw Siegfried, this must be he. He tells the king that by this hero's hand had fallen the brave Nibelungs, the high princes Shilbung and Nibelung.

Great wonders had been wrought by this Siegfried. One day he came to a mountain, and suddenly encountered some brave guardians of the great hoard, the treasure of the Nibelung, as well as dwarfs and gnomes working underground to find gold and jewels. The Nibelungs had just brought the hoard forth from a cavern, and were about to divide it. They spied Siegfried, and cordially greeted him. Shilbung and Nibelung asked him to apportion the treasure between them, and he could not refuse. He saw more precious stones than a hundred double wagons would hold, and much red gold besides. All this he must divide, and for reward they allotted to him the sword of the Nibelungs, called Balmung.

In vain Siegfried now strove to come to the end of the task. At length the kings, in anger and impatience, attacked him; but Siegfried, with their father's sword, smote the two princes dead and also twelve knights, and vanquished seven hundred others. Next the famous dwarf Alberic strove to overcome him, but failed, and

was compelled to yield to him the magic helmet, the Tarnkappe, which rendered the wearer invisible.

Thus did Siegfried become master of the hoard; which he now commanded the Nibelungs to carry back whence they had brought it, and made Alberic its custodian, and imposed on him the oath of service. Thus, too, did Hagen continue to speak to Siegfried:

> "And yet another story of Siegfried I have heard:
> How he did slay a dragon with his own hand and sword,
> And in its blood he bathed him till horny grew his skin,
> And thus no sword can cut him, as often hath been seen."

After listening to this wonderful recital, the King went down to greet Siegfried, whom he asked for information as to whence he came and on what errand. Gunther and his brothers marvelled when the stranger boldly declared that he had come to claim the land as his own. Their wrath was kindled, but it soon appeared that this prince from Burgundy had not really come with hostile intent, and on both sides the talk fell into milder mood.

Siegfried not only became the honoured guest of Gunther, but went forth to help him against fierce Saxon invaders, whom he vanquished in a fearful conflict. Now Gunther rejoiced, and the heart of Kriemhilda was gladdened by the triumph of her chosen hero. But at this time it was rumoured that many fair maidens dwelt beyond the seas, and Gunther was minded to woo one of them.

There was said to be a queen whose strength was even equal to her beauty, and whose love would be only for that knight that could surpass her at the spear, and in hurling the stone, and in leaping after it to the mark. He only would win this damsel who could excel her in these three games; and if he lost he would also forfeit his head. Gunther declared to his knights that he would risk his body to gain this beautiful but cruel wife, and they failed to dissuade him from the peril. And so to Iceland beyond the seas he journeyed after Queen Brun-

hilda.[1] By the advice of Hagen he asked Siegfried to go with him, and the latter consented on condition that the King would bestow on him the hand of his sister Kriemhilda.

"That swear I to thee, Siegfried," cried Gunther, "on thine hand!
And if the fair Brunhilda doth come here to this land,
I'll give my sister to thee, to have and hold for wife:
So may'st thou with thy fair one aye lead a joyous life."

Siegfried took with him his magic Tarnkappe, and he advised that only Hagen and Dankwart should accompany them, and that all four should go as simple knights. They quitted the Rhine in a stout ship, and after voyaging for twelve days saw the towers of Isentein, Brunhilda's castle.

Courteously were the four travellers welcomed; but, when Brunhilda was informed of their errand, she haughtily challenged Gunther to the triple contest, which forthwith took place. Gunther must have perished but for the magic of Siegfried, who, invisible in his cloud-helmet, was in each stage with Gunther, lending him his immense strength. The Queen, though enraged, owned herself beaten, and called on her retainers to acknowledge Gunther as their lord. And, after a high festival, Brunhilda set sail with Gunther and his three friends for the Rhineland, where with great rejoicings the double wedding was celebrated of Gunther and Brunhilda and Siegfried with Kriemhilda.

Before the hour of vespers one day the tumult loud
Was heard, of many warriors, who in the court did crowd.
Their knightly feats they practised to pass the time away;
And many a man and woman ran up to watch the play.

The noble queens were seated together, side by side,
They thought of two bold warriors, renowned far and wide,
Then said the fair Kriemhilda: "I have indeed a lord
Who rightly is the ruler of all this kingdom broad."

[1] Or Brunnhilde, or simply Brunhild.

Then cried Lady Brunhilda: "Howe'er could such thing be,
Unless there were none living but only thou and he?
Beneath his rule the kingdom might fall in such a case:
So long as Gunther liveth, it could not come to pass."

This rejoinder kindled Kriemhilda's wrath. Both women quickly waxed angry. Fierce indeed was their quarrel. Brunhilda wept passionately, so that Gunther's men compassionated her, and there arose causes of trouble which led to plots and treachery, and at length many warriors died because two women had quarrelled.

Now it was by foulest treachery that the brave Siegfried met his fate. His wife was sorely anxious as to what might happen when he went forth to war, and told Hagen a secret, hoping that thereby she might save him from harm. She related how when he bathed in the blood of the dragon one spot between his shoulders had by chance been covered by a leaf dropping from a linden tree. In that spot alone could he be wounded, and Kriemhilda implored Hagen to watch over Siegfried's welfare.

With false intention, Gunther and Hagen went hunting. With them, all unsuspecting, rode Siegfried, in spite of the tearful entreaties of his wife, who told him how she had dreamed that two wild boars had chased him over the heath, and how the flowers were red with blood. Then two mountains fell on him, and in her dream she saw him no more. But Siegfried kissed her, set at naught her fears, and rode off. She never saw her hero alive again. In the chase he slew many great beasts of the forest, outrunning everything and everybody that day. But after the hunt was over, as he lay down to drink at a brook in the forest Hagen stole up behind him and basely slew him by stabbing him in the back, in the one vulnerable spot which Kriemhilda had described. The flowers were all red with his blood.

The widowed Kriemhilda bewailed day by day, and none could give her comfort, excepting the youthful

knight, Giselher, who alone was true and good to her. As for the beautiful Brunhilda, she sat in cold arrogance, caring not for the grief of her rival, and never again turning to her in sympathy or friendship.

Sorrowfully Kriemhilda went daily to the minster to pray for the soul of her husband. She mourned him as long as her life endured, and terrible was her vengeance.

But after four years, thinking to console her, her friends contrived that she should possess the great hoard from the land of the Nibelungs, to which she had full right, since it had been her marriage gift. Giselher and Gernot went for it, and with them Kriemhilda sent eight thousand men to fetch it from the place where it was concealed, and where Alberic guarded it. It was at once surrendered, for Alberic and his men acknowledged that it was the noble queen's wedding-gift, fatal though it had been to the hero, her husband. Kriemhilda's men carried the treasure on their ships across the waves and then in twelve waggons.

When Kriemhilda received the hoard of precious stones and gold, it filled towers and chambers. She would have given it all up to have had Siegfried again by her side. But again Hagen wronged her, for he secured the keys, and, when the King was away on a journey, he seized the treasure and sunk it in the Rhine at Lochheim. So that Kriemhilda hated him more bitterly than ever.

Now Etzel, King of the Huns, who had lost his wife, Queen Helca, mourned sorely for her. His friends thereupon commended to him a beautiful widow in the land of Burgundy, named Kriemhilda, as one who would make him a noble wife. He therefore sent good Rudeger of Bechlaren as envoy to seek her hand. But she for many days would not listen to the overtures, though her brothers besought her to cease her mourning now that thirteen years had passed. At length, the thought occurring to her that it might be that King Etzel, if she wed-

ded him, would aid her in her long-cherished schemes of vengeance, Kriemhilda gave her consent, and with a great retinue of noble knights and maidens she set forth on her journey to the land of the Huns.

King Etzel came to meet his bride with a splendid train of followers, and was by her sweetly greeted with kisses. Twelve knights were also kissed by her. Then at Tulna there was a joust, and great was the honour won by knights.

Next they came to Vienna, where they were received with great honour, and then the party journeyed to King Etzel's castle in Hungary, where Kriemhilda reigned gloriously as Queen Helca had done before her. So in happiness and honour they dwelt together till the seventh year, during which time, to the King's great joy, Kriemhilda bore a son. He was named Ortlieb. And so things went happily till the thirteenth year.

And now the Queen thinking much on the old wrongs inflicted on her, and of her honour among the Nibelungs, considered how she might be avenged on Hagen, who had robbed her of Siegfried; and the yearning grew upon her soul.

Easily she persuaded Etzel to send an invitation to Gernot, her brother, and Hagen of Tronje to visit Hungary. When the message was received, Hagen in his craft feared to go; but Gunther and Gernot resolved that they two would both visit their sister, and Hagen set out with them from the Rhine for the Danube. The Prince of the Rhine equipped for their escort a thousand and three score of his knights and nine thousand squires, to aid at the great festival that should be celebrated.

With false heart Kriemhilda went forth to meet the Burgundians. She kissed Giselher, but Hagen she at once challenged, demanding from him what he had done with the Nibelung hoard. "The devil a bit I bring you!" cried Hagen. "I have to carry enough in my shield, sword, and mail, so I carry nothing to you."

The evil work began at a great joust, when a proud Hun was slain by stout Folker, the famous fiddler, in anger. Then at dinner Hagen raised the wrath of Etzel by insulting remarks about young Prince Ortlieb. Next a fierce fight took place between a party of the Burgundians and many of the Huns, in which all the latter who fought were slain. Folker and Hagen had mainly caused the trouble. But the feud grew hourly more bitter, and great numbers of the knights of the land of the Huns began to flock to the aid of King Etzel and the Queen. In the fray Ortlieb was slain by Hagen.

To Kriemhilda came young Giselher and besought his sister to show mercy to her great company of kinsmen and guests, but the Queen hardened her heart. "I will show no mercy," said she, "for I received none. Yet, deliver Hagen captive, and ye shall live, for ye are my own brothers. Then there shall be a truce."

Her offer was refused, and she issued the terrible command of vengeance. At her order the hall was set on fire in which the knights were gathered, her own knights guarding the doors to prevent any from escaping. But Hagen was taken alive and led to the Queen, who ordered him to be shut in a dungeon. Truly her vengeance was bitter. She went to Hagen and angrily spoke her will that he should give her back the Nibelung hoard. Then might he be spared. Grimly he refused, and she bade her attendants smite off his head. But Kriemhilda quickly suffered, for the bold knight Hildebrand sprang fiercely at her with his sword. And so the story ends.

I cannot tell you plainly what later might have been,
Save that in bitter weeping were knights and ladies seen—
And noble liegemen also—for friends beloved laid low.
The story now is ended: this is the Nibelung's woe.

THOMAS OTWAY

Venice Preserved

Persons in the Drama

DUKE OF VENICE
PRIULI, *father of Belvidera*
JAFFIER, *husband of Belvidera*
PIERRE, *friend of Jaffier*
ANTONIO, *a Senator*
RENAULT, *a conspirator*
OFFICER
FRIAR
BELVIDERA

SCENE: *Venice*

ACT I

SCENE: *A chamber*

BELVIDERA *discovered. Enter* JAFFIER, *who, after making a fruitless appeal for pecuniary assistance to his father-in-law,* PRIULI *(who hates him for having robbed him of his child), has been tempted by his dearest friend,* PIERRE, *a soldier of fortune, to join with* BEDAMAR, *the Spanish ambassador, and other conspirators in a plot to overthrow the Senate.* PIERRE *has inveighed against the rank injustice and the grinding tyranny of the Senate, but his real grievance against the ruling powers is that they have*

Thomas Otway's thirty-two years of life is typical of the age in which he lived—the age of Dryden and of Nell Gwynne. He was born at Trotton, near Midhurst, on March 3, 1652, and educated at Christ Church, Oxford, for holy orders. In 1671 he was allotted a part in Mrs. Aphra Behn's "Forced Marriage," but the experiment was a failure. Later, in 1675, his first play, "Alcibiades," was produced with indifferent success. This he followed with "Don Carlos," a mediocre rhymed tragedy, which, nevertheless, had the lengthy run of ten consecutive nights. As his name as a playwright became established, an over-indulgence in drink threatened his prospects. He conceived an absorbing

censured him for preventing a foul outrage done him by one of their number, who has tried to rob him of the dearest object of his affections. JAFFIER, *on the other hand, has joined the plot because he is a desperate man, whose heavy debts prevent him from maintaining his beloved wife* BELVIDERA *in that state to which her birth and his love entitle her. He has just returned from being enrolled among the conspirators, having first, as a pledge of his faith, handed over* BELVIDERA *to the care of* RENAULT, *one of the most prominent of his new associates.*

BELVIDERA: Tell me, be just, and tell me
Why dwells that heavy cloud upon thy face?
Why am I made a stranger? Why that sigh,
And I not know the cause?
Why starts my love, and looks as if he wished
His fate were finished? Tell me, ease my fear;
Lest, when we next time meet, I want the power
To search into the sickness of thy mind,
But talk as wildly then as thou look'st now.

JAFFIER: Oh, Belvidera!

BELVIDERA: Why was I last night delivered to a villain?

JAFFIER: Ha! A villain?

BELVIDERA: Yes; to a villain! Why at such an hour
Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches,
That look as hell had drawn them into league?

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passion for the lady who filled the leading rôle in the initial performances of most of his plays—a passion which was treated with disdain. His last years were given to despondency and dissipation, and his death—which, according to tradition, was the result of being choked by a piece of bread begged from a gentleman at a coffee-house—occurred on April 14, 1685. Otway was the best tragic poet of his time. His pathos is never forced, but springs entirely from the situation. This is seen to excellent advantage in his admittedly greatest tragedy, "Venice Preserved, or a Plot Discovered," which appeared in 1682. Nothing more tender than the love scenes between Jaffier and Belvidera has ever been written; and no dramatist has ever conceived a more emotional plot than that of "Venice Preserved."

Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
Was I delivered with such dreadful ceremonies?
" To you, sirs, and to your honours, I bequeath her,
And with her this: whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart."
Oh, why's that " rest " concealed from me? Must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?
But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves;
Straight to the Senate, tell them all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

JAFFIER: Is this the Roman virtue? This the blood
That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter?
Would she have e'er betrayed her Brutus?

BELVIDERA: No; for Brutus trusted her.

JAFFIER: Yet, think a little, ere thou tempt me further;
Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of,
Into the vile tears and despicable sorrows.
I have bound myself by all the strictest sacraments,
Divine and human——

BELVIDERA: Speak!

JAFFIER: To kill thy father——

BELVIDERA: My father!

JAFFIER: Nay, the throats of the whole Senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He, amongst us,
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damned. How rich and beauteous will the face
Of ruin look, when these wide streets run blood!
I, and the glorious partners of my fortune,
Shouting and striding o'er the prostrate dead,
Still to new waste; whilst thou, far off in safety,
Smiling shalt see the wonders of our daring,
And, when night comes, with praise and love receive me.

BELVIDERA: Oh!

JAFFIER: Have a care, and shrink not even in thought!
For if thou dost——

BELVIDERA: I know it, thou wilt kill me.
Do, strike thy sword into this bosom; lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my father! Though his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing,
Driv'n me to basest wants, can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butchered in his age?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being?
Nay, be a traitor, too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
As cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

JAFFIER: Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera. I have engaged
With men of soul fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashion.

BELVIDERA: What's he to whose curst hands last night thou gav'st me?
Wast that well done? Oh, I could tell a story
Would rouse thy lion-heart out of its den.

JAFFIER: Speak on, I charge thee.

BELVIDERA: O, my love! if e'er
The Belvidera's peace deserved thy care,
Remove me from this place. Last night! Last night!

JAFFIER: Distract me not, but give me all the truth!

BELVIDERA: No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the power of that old son of mischief,
But what vile wretch approached me. How I wept,
And shrunk, and trembled! Wished in vain for him
That should protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.

JAFFIER: Patience, sweet Heaven, till I make vengeance sure!

BELVIDERA: He drew the hideous dagger forth thou gav'st him,
And with upbraiding smiles he said: "Behold it!
This is the pledge of a false husband's love."

But with my cries I scared his coward heart,
Till he withdrew, and muttered vows to hell.
These are thy friends! With *these* thy life, thy honour,
Thy love, all staked, and all will go to ruin.

JAFFIER: No more: I charge thee keep this secret close.

Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour.

BELVIDERA: Oh! should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

JAFFIER: Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night, to purchase the creation.

JAFFIER *tells* PIERRE *of the insult put on* BELVIDERA *by* RENAULT, *and holds a conversation with* RENAULT *himself in which he pays an ironical tribute to his truth and honesty. This rouses* RENAULT, *who, subsequently, at the final meeting of the conspirators, takes advantage of the departure of* JAFFIER *to denounce him as a traitor.* PIERRE, *by alternate threats and appeals, and by exposing Renault's behaviour to* BELVIDERA, *allays the tumult and suspicion, and pledges his life for the loyalty of* JAFFIER.

ACT II

SCENE.—*The Senate House, where appear sitting the* DUKE OF VENICE, PRIULI, ANTONIO, *and eight other Senators.*

DUKE: Antony, Priuli, Senators of Venice,
Speak, why are we assembled here this night?

PRIULI: We stand upon the brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's formed a dark conspiracy,

To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends; our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes; nay, the hour, too, fixed;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this moment,
And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning; but if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butchered.

[*Enter Officer and guards.*

OFFICER: Two prisoners have the guard seized in the street,
Who say they come to inform this reverend Senate
About the present danger.

[*Enter an officer with* JAFFIER, *who, sorely against his will, has been persuaded by* BELVIDERA *to give himself up and to betray the conspiracy to the Senate.*

ALL: Give them entrance. Well, who are you?

JAFFIER: A villain. Would that every man that hears me
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.

DUKE: 'Tis murmured that a plot has been contrived
Against this state; and you've a share in't, too.
If you're a villain, to redeem your honour
Unfold the truth, and be restored with mercy.

JAFFIER: Think not, that I to save my life come hither;
I know its value better; but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fixed and sealed. I'm the sworn foe of Venice,
But I may prove a friend.

DUKE: The slave capitulates! Give him the torture.

JAFFIER: Cowards are scared with threatenings; boys are whipt
Into confession; but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
"Give him the torture!" Name but such a thing
Again, by Heaven! I'll shut these lips for ever.

ANTONIO: A bloody-minded fellow, I'll warrant.

DUKE: Name your conditions.
JAFFIER: For myself full pardon,
Besides the lives of two and twenty friends,
Whose names are here enrolled. Nay, let their crimes
Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
And sacred promise of this reverend council,
That in a full assembly of the Senate
The thing I ask be ratified. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secret of your danger.
ALL: We all swear.
JAFFIER: And as ye keep the oath,
May you and your prosperity be blessed
Or cursed for ever.
ALL: Else be cursed for ever.
JAFFIER: Then here's the list, and with't the full disclose
Of all that threatens you. [*Delivers a paper.*
ANTONIO: Why, what a dreadful catalogue of cut-throats is here!
I'll warrant you, not one of these fellows but has a face
Like a lion. I dare not so much as read their names over.
DUKE: Give order that all diligent search be made
To seize these men: their characters are public;
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of a famed Grecian woman
Called Aquilina; see that place secured.
You, Jaffier, must with patience bear, till morning,
To be our prisoner.
JAFFIER: Would the chains of death
Had bound me safe, ere I had known this minute!
I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones.
Lead me, where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;
Where I may doze out what I've left of life.
DUKE: Captain, withdraw your prisoner.
[*Exit, guarded. Enter Officer.*

OFFICER: My lords, more traitors,
Seized in the very act of consultation;
Furnished with arms and instruments of mischief.
DUKE: Bring in the prisoners.
[*Enter* PIERRE, RENAULT, *and other conspirators in fetters.*
PIERRE: You, my lords and fathers
(As you are pleased to call yourselves) of Venice,
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often laboured in your service?
DUKE: Go on; you shall be heard, sir.
ANTONIO: And be hanged too, I hope.
PIERRE: If I'm a traitor,
Produce my charge; or show the wretch that's base
And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.
DUKE: Know you one JAFFIER?
[*Conspirators murmur.*
PIERRE: Yes, and know his virtue.
His justice, truth, his general worth, and sufferings
From a hard father, taught me first to love him.
DUKE: See him brought forth.
[*Re-enter* JAFFIER, *guarded.*
PIERRE: My friend, too, bound! Nay, then,
Our fate has conquered us, and we must fall.
They call us traitors. Art thou one, my brother?
JAFFIER: To thee, I am the falsest, veriest slave
That e'er betrayed a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes, which morning was to have crowned,
Has this cursed tongue o'erthrown.
PIERRE: So, then, all's over:
Venice has lost her freedom, I my life?
No more! Farewell!
DUKE: Say, will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the Senate's mercy?

PIERRE: Cursed be your Senate! Cursed your constitution!
The curse of growing factions and divisions
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety.
DUKE: Pardon, or death?
PIERRE: Death! Honourable death!
RENAULT: Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give.
DUKE: Break up the council. Captain, guard your prisoners!
Jaffier, you are free, but these must wait for judgment.
[*Exeunt all the Senators.*
PIERRE: Come, where's my dungeon? Lead me to my straw:
It will not be the first time I've lodged hard
To do the Senate service.
JAFFIER: Hold, one minute.
PIERRE: Who's he disputes the judgment of the Senate?
Presumptuous rebel. On! [*Strikes* JAFFIER.
JAFFIER: I must be heard, I must have leave to speak.
Thou hast disgraced me, Pierre, by a vile blow:
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries;
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy;
Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance.
PIERRE: What whining monk art thou? What holy cheat
That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears?
And canst thus vilely? Hence, I know thee not!
JAFFIER: Not know me, Pierre?
PIERRE: No, know thee not. What art thou?
JAFFIER: Jaffier, thy friend; thy once loved, valued friend.
PIERRE: By Heavens, thou liest! The man so called, my friend,

Was generous, honest, faithful, just and valiant,
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely,
Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart:
But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward;
Poor even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect;
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.

JAFFIER: I have not wronged thee; by these tears I have not,
But still am honest, true, and hope, too, valiant;
My mind still full of thee: therefore, still noble.
Let not thine eyes, then, shun me; nor thy heart
Detest me utterly. Oh, look upon me!
What shall I do—what say to make thee hear me?

PIERRE: Dar'st swear thou hast not wronged me? Whence these chains?
Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
Whence this dishonour but from thee, thou false one?

JAFFIER: All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

PIERRE: What's that?

JAFFIER: To take thy life on such conditions
The Council have proposed.

PIERRE: Life! Ask my life? Confess? record myself
A villain for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this curséd city
A discontented and repining spirit?
No! This vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't!

JAFFIER: I'll weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty:
Lie at thy feet and kiss them, though they spurn me,
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.

PIERRE: Art not a traitor, a most scandalous coward,
Spiritless, void of honour, one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life?

JAFFIER: All, all, and more, much more: my faults are numberless.

PIERRE: And wouldst thou have me live on terms like thine?

JAFFIER: The safety of thy life was all I aimed at;
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.

PIERRE: I scorn it more, because preserved by thee:
And as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Relieved thy wants, and raised thee from thy state
To rank thee in my list of noble friends,
All I received in surety for thy truth
Were unregarded oaths, and this—this dagger,
Given with a worthless pledge thou since hast stolen,
So I restore it back to thee again;
Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this cursed hour to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest with thee. Take it.
Farewell! For now I owe thee nothing.

JAFFIER: My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ache with gazing.

PIERRE: Leave me! Nay, then thus—thus I throw thee from me,
And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee!

[*Exeunt* PIERRE *and conspirators, guarded.*

BELVIDERA *enters and tries to console* JAFFIER *in his access of remorse and humiliation. She then tells him that the Senate has gone back on its word, and has issued warrants for the execution of the exempted conspirators, who are first to be racked and then broken on the wheel. In his agony,* JAFFIER *at first tries to keep his vow by plunging the dagger into* BELVIDERA'S *heart; but her caresses unman him, and, confessing himself a coward, he beseeches her to fall at her father's feet and not to rise till she has obtained the Senate's pardon for* PIERRE.

Act III

Scene I.—Belvidera *becomes reconciled to her father and obtains from him a promise that he will do his best to have the lives of the conspirators spared. But* Priuli's *efforts prove unavailing, and in a final harrowing interview between* Belvidera *and* Jaffier, *the latter, torn between love for the partner of his domestic joys and hatred for the betrayer of his honour, bids his wife an everlasting farewell, telling her he goes to attend the execution of* Pierre, *who has desired to see him before he dies, and has offered him his last forgiveness.*

Scene II.—*A scaffold, and a wheel prepared for the execution of* Pierre; *then enter Officer,* Pierre *and guards, a Friar, Executioner, and a great rabble.*

[*Enter* Jaffier.

Jaffier: Crawling on my knees,
And prostrate on the earth, let me approach thee:
How shall I look up to thy injured face,
That always used to smile with friendship on me?

Pierre: Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
I can't forget to love thee. Prithee, Jaffier,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I'm now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men like thee to bless my journey.

Jaffier: Good! I'm the vilest creature, worse than e'er
Suffered the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.
Why was I sent for to be used thus kindly?
Call, call me villain, as I am! describe
The foul complexion of my hateful deeds:
Lead me to the rack, and stretch me in thy stead!
I have crimes enough to give it its full load.

OFFICER: The time grows short, your friends are dead already.

JAFFIER: Dead!

PIERRE: Yes, dead, Jaffier; they have all died like men, too,
Worthy their character.

JAFFIER: And what must I do?

PIERRE: Couldst thou yet be a friend, a generous friend,
I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heaven knows, I want a friend.

JAFFIER: And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue.

PIERRE: I charge thee, Jaffier, live.

JAFFIER: Yes, I will live;
But it shall be to see thy fall revenged.

PIERRE: Thou'rt noble: I forgive thee: shall I trust thee?

JAFFIER: No; I've been false already.

PIERRE: Dost thou love me?

JAFFIER: Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings!

PIERRE: Curse on this weakness.

[*He weeps.*

JAFFIER: Tears! Amazement! Tears!
I never saw thee melted thus before;
And know there's something labouring in thy bosom,
That must have vent.

PIERRE: Seest thou that engine?

[*Pointing to the wheel.*

JAFFIER: Why?

PIERRE: Is't fit a soldier who has lived with honour,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been roused with conquest,
Be exposed a common carcass on a wheel?

JAFFIER: Ha!

PIERRE: Speak! is it fitting?

JAFFIER: What's to be done?

PIERRE: Do something noble to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attaint it.
OFFICER: The day grows late, sir.
PIERRE: I'll make haste. Oh, Jaffier;
Thou—thou'st betrayed me, do me some way justice.
JAFFIER: No more of that: thy wishes shall be satisfied.
I have a wife, and she shall bleed; my child too
Yield up his little throat, and all
To appease thee.
[*Going away.* PIERRE *holds him.*
PIERRE: No—this—no more.
[*He whispers to* JAFFIER.
JAFFIER: Ha! is't then so?
PIERRE: Most certainly.
JAFFIER: I'll do it.
PIERRE: Remember.
OFFICER: Sir!
PIERRE: Come, now I'm ready.
[*He and* JAFFIER *ascend the scaffold.*
Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate, and die with decency.
Come.
[*Takes off his gown.* EXECUTIONER *prepares to bind him.*
FRIAR: Son.
PIERRE: Hence, tempter!
OFFICER: Stand off, priest.
PIERRE: I thank you, sir (*to the* OFFICER).
You'll think on't (*to* JAFFIER).
JAFFIER: It won't grow stale before to-morrow.
PIERRE: Now, Jaffier! Now I'm going. Now——
[EXECUTIONER *having bound him.*
JAFFIER: Have at thee,
Thou honest heart, then—here! (*Stabs him.*)
And this is well, too! (*Stabs himself.*)
FRIAR: Damnable deed!

PIERRE: Now thou'st indeed been faithful.
This was done nobly——we've deceived the Senate.
JAFFIER: Bravely.
PIERRE: Ha, ha, ha!—oh! oh! [*Dies.*
JAFFIER: Now, ye cursed rulers,
Thus of the blood ye have shed I make libation,
And sprinkle it mingling. May it rest upon you
And all your race! Be henceforth peace a stranger
Within your walls; let plague and famine waste
Your generation—oh, poor Belvidera!
Sir, I've a wife; bear this in safety to her,
A token, that with my dying breath I blessed her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.
I'm sick. I'm quiet. [*Dies.*
OFFICER: Bear this news to the Senate,
And guard their bodies till there's further orders.
Heaven grant I die so well!

SCENE III.—*An apartment in* PRIULI'S *house. Soft music. Enter* BELVIDERA, *distracted, led by two of her women,* PRIULI, *and servants.*

BELVIDERA: Are you returned? See, father, here he's come again:
Am I to blame to love him? O, thou dear one,
Why do you fly me? Are you angry still then?
Jaffier, where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here, somewhere.
Stand off, I say! What, gone? Remember't tyrant:
I may revenge myself for this trick, one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't. Renault's a nasty fellow;
Hang him, hang him, hang him.
[*Enter* OFFICER.
PRIULI: News, what news?
OFFICER: Most sad, sir;
Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent

'A shameful death, stabbed Pierre, and next himself;
Both fell together.

PRIULI: Daughter!

BELVIDERA: Ha! look there!

[*The ghosts of* JAFFIER *and of* PIERRE *appear.*

My husband bloody, and his friend, too! Murder:
Who has done this? Speak to me, thou sad vision!
On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Vanished—
Here they went down—oh, I'll dig, dig the den up!
You shan't delude me thus. Ho, Jaffier, Jaffier!
Peep up and give me but a look. I have him!
I've got him, father. Oh! now how I'll smuggle him!
My love! my dear! my blessing! help me! help me!
They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom;
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell! [*Dies.*

PRIULI: Lead me into some place that's fit for mourning:
Where the free air, light, and the cheerful sun
May never enter: hang it round with black:
Set up one taper, that may last a day,
'As long as I've to live; and there all leave me.

[*Exeunt all.*

OVID

The Metamorphoses

THE THEME

Of shapes that suffered transformation strange
My Muse will sing. Ye Gods, that miracles
Like these have wrought, inspire my great emprise,
Guiding my verse unbroken from the birth
Of things primeval till Augustan times!

THE AGES OF THE WORLD

First sprang the Golden Age, which of its will,
Without revenge or law, kept faith and right.
There was yet no penalty, nor dread,
Nor threat of law on brazen tablet graved;

Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso) was born at Sulmo, about ninety miles from Rome, in 43 B.C. He died in banishment at Tomi, on the Black Sea, in 18 A.D. His father hoped that by training him in law, Ovid might pass through a successful civil career; but the youth's astonishing aptitude for "lisping in numbers," which came to him as naturally as to Pope, proved the determining influence of his life. So he became the favourite poet of the "smart set" at Rome under the Emperor Augustus, in the period immediately preceding the opening of the Christian era. His "Loves," and the imaginary letters in his "Heroines" were popular in high circles. In his "Art of Love," however, the Emperor saw influences pernicious to society, and found in a court intrigue sufficient excuse to banish Ovid in A.D. 8. This severance from the world of fashion cost him infinite misery, which he expressed chiefly in his "Sorrows." But before his exile he had shown his wonderful gifts of narrative in his "Metamorphoses," or tales of transformation, which he himself esteemed the most important of his works. This work is not, apart from its general idea, an artistic unity; but it is a rich treasury of stories which has exerted potent influence upon art and literature, especially at the epoch of the Renaissance. The translations here given have been made by Prof. J. Wight Duff.

No helmet, neither sword; in peace secure,
Tribes spent their happy years, nor knew a foe.
By plough uncleft, earth yielded everything;
Content with food that grew without constraint,
Men picked hill-strawberries, or arbutus,
Cornels, or berries dark from bramble-bush,
Or acorns dropped from Jove's wide-spreading tree.
Spring reigned eternal: soft with genial breeze
The zephyrs fanned the flowers of seedless birth.
Soon, too, unploughed, the earth bore crops; and land,
Unfallowed, yet grew white with heavy corn.
With Saturn hurled to darksome Tartarus,
When Jove was lord, there came the Silver Age,
Worse than the Golden, yet outshining Brass.
Jove shortened the unbroken spring of old,
And with four seasons made the year complete.
Then first air glowed with droughty fervour parched;
Then first hung icicles by wind congealed;
And then man took to homes, of caverns made,
Or fenced with shrubs, or twined with wattled reeds;
Then first the seed of crops in furrows long
Was laid, and oxen lowed beneath the yoke.
Third in succession was the Brazen Age,
Fiercer of soul, keener for rugged war,
But not guilt-stained. And last hard Iron came.
Straight burst upon an age of meaner vein
All wickedness. Shame fled with Truth and Faith;
Fraud took their place, and Guile and Stratagem,
And Violence and guilty Lust of Gain.
Men set their sails to winds which mariner
Knew not erewhile; trees long on mountain-tops
On waters strange to them now danced as keels.
The teeming soil was asked for more than crops:
The very bowels of the earth were searched,
And riches hidden near the shades of hell
Dug out to lure man to iniquity.
Now baneful steel, and gold more baneful still,

Came forth: and armed with both these weapons War,
Who wields his clashing arms in bloody hand.
Spoil made a livelihood; nor guest from host
Nor kin from kin was safe, when brothers strove.
Dread step-dames mix the lurid poison-draught;
Sons ask betimes how long their sires may live;
Kind duty lies o'erthrown; and, last of gods,
Doth Virgin Justice quit the blood-stained earth.

THE FLOOD AND THE RE-PEOPLING OF EARTH

The wickedness of the Iron Age troubled not only earth but heaven. The Giants rebelliously conspired to storm the high citadel of the Gods, and the cruel treacheries of mankind determined Jupiter to destroy the human race under water. The sole survivors of the Deluge were Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha, who were oracularly instructed to renew the people of the world by "casting their parent's bones behind them." The "bones of a parent" were interpreted to mean "stones of the earth," and the prophesied miracle was accomplished:

Then with head veiled and raiment all ungirt
They cast the stones behind, as they were bid.
The stones—who shall believe, save that grey-eld
Bears witness?—laid aside solidity,
And as they softened drew a new shape on:
Then bigger grown, with milder nature graced,
They seemed to shadow forth the form of man—
Nor clearly yet, but as a statue might
Of marble incomplete, or image rude.
Howbeit, what in them was filled with juice,
What earthy, was transformed to use of flesh;
What solid and unbendable, to bone.
Stones from the man's hands took the shape of males,
And what the woman cast renewed her kind.
Thence springs our race, hardened, inured to toil,
Bearing the proofs of stony origin.

DAPHNE TURNED INTO A BAY-TREE

Penëus' daughter, Daphne, was the first
Apollo loved, not with a passion blind,
Chance-killed, but by Cupid's anger wrought.
The Delian god, proud of his archery,
Saw Cupid bend his well-strung bow, and said:
"Thou wanton boy, what mean those gallant arms—
Such harness as my shoulders well might wear,
For I can wound a quarry or a foe.
Content thee with thy torch to fare in quest
Of amours: lay no claim to my renown!"
Then Venus' son: "O, Phœbus, let thy bow
Shoot all things, but 'tis mine to shoot at thee!"
He spake, and from his quiver drew a pair
Of diverse shafts: one makes, one frightens love.
The dart of love is golden, burnished sharp;
The other, blunt with lead beneath the reed.
With one the Love-god shot the nymph; with one
Transfixed Apollo's inmost heart: and straight
He is in love; she loathes a lover's name.
Full many suitors wooed her; whom she scorned,
And coy to man the pathless woodland ranged,
Unheeding what love is, what wedlock means.
Her sire said oft: "O daughter, thou must wed."
But hating, like a crime, the marriage-torch,
With fair face mantled in red modesty,
She threw fond arms around her father's neck,
And pleaded: "Father dear, grant me for aye
To live a maid: Such boon Diana won."
He doth comply; but her sweet comeliness
Forbids her hopes: it harms her to be fair.
For Phœbus loves, and he would Daphne wed;
And what he would, he hopes: his oracles
For once do cheat the god of prophecy.
He sees her locks float careless o'er her neck,
And sighs: "What would they be with care adorned?"

Sees eyes flash star-like, sees her pretty lips—
Which he is ill-contented but to see.
Swifter than wind, she flees from his appeal:
"O stay, Penean nymph: I am no foe.
Stay, nymph! So might a lamb flee from a wolf;
But love it is that prompteth my pursuit.
Ah, me! lest stumbling thou shouldst prick on thorns
Feet that deserve no pain—and I the cause!
I am no shepherd boor; I have no flocks
To tend. Thou knowest not, rash maid,
Whom thou dost shun: and so thou shunnest me
Whom Delphi, Claros, Tenedos do own
For lord: and one whose sire is Jupiter."
More had he spoken, but in panic she
Fled from him with his pleading incomplete.
How lovely in her flight! The breezes tossed
Her flying raiment as they met her limbs.
But her pursuer, on love's wings sustained,
Gains on her, granting never a respite,
Till on her floating tresses he doth breathe.
Outworn she blenched and prayed the River-god,
"O father, aid me by thy stream divine!
O change my beauty that hath been too great!"
Scarce had she prayed when numbness seized her limbs:
A filmy bark her bosom soft enfolds;
Her hair to leaves, her arms to branches turn,
And feet so swift of late cling fast to roots.
Still Phœbus loves the tree, and, hand on stem,
Still feels a heart throb 'neath the new-grown bark—
Prints kisses on the wood, which seems to shrink.
"Since thou canst never be my bride," he cries,
"Thou shalt, O laurel, be my tree: my locks
Shall wear thee, and my harp and quiver, too.
There shall attend the Roman generals
When gleeful shouts shall triumph celebrate,
And long processions through the Capitol.

E'en as my head is young with locks unshorn.
So keep, my bay, thy leafage ever green!"

THE CHARIOTING OF PHAËTHON

Young Phaëthon was one day taunted with his birth, by one who asserted that his mother Clymene lied when she declared his father to be the Sun-god Apollo. The lad, being of too high spirit tamely to brook insult, determined to learn the truth. Into the glorious palace of the Sun he made his way, and entered Apollo's presence.

In purple raiment clad, the Sun-god sat
On throne alit with brilliant emeralds.
To right and left were Day and Month and Year,
The Ages, and, at equal spaces, Hours.
Fresh Spring stood wreathed in diadem of blooms,
And light-clad Summer chaplet-decked with grain;
There Autumn stood, with trodden grapes besmeared,
And icy Winter white and rough of hair.
Midmost himself, the Sun did turn those eyes
Wherewith he seeth all, upon the youth
Affrighted at the marvels of the scene,
And asks, "What brings thee here, my Phaëthon,
My son, whom never thy sire shall disavow?"
The youth replied: "O, universal light
Of this wide world, O, Phœbus, father mine,
Such pledges grant me as shall prove that I
Am thine own son, and clear my mind of doubt."
Then did his sire take flashing from his head
His sun-beam halo, called the youth to him,
And so, embracing, "Thou dost ill deserve,"
He cried, "that any should deny thee mine.
My Clymene hath truly told thy birth,
That thou mayest doubt no more, ask what thou wilt
For boon. As witness of my words I name
That unseen lake by which a god doth swear!"
The oath scarce sworn, he begged his father's car—
For one day's full control and governance
Of those wing-footed chargers of the Sun!

The father is appalled at the daring request. He argues with his boy. It is a wish beyond what is conceded to mortal nature. Apollo dwells on the frightful hazards of the dizzy course. His fatherhood should be evident from his affection for Phaëthon:

True pledge thou seekest: true pledge is in my fear!

But the youth insists, and the resplendent equipage is harnessed for him. His father can but offer directions and admonitions:

Swerve upwards—thou will set all heaven afire;
Downwards—all earth! 'Tis safest in the midst.

The imposing start is made. Then follows the frantic rush of the steeds, and the unaccustomed driver now blanches in dismay. He loses control of the sun-chariot, which brings disastrous scorching and devastation upon many lands, till the agonised Earth-mother is impelled to implore Jove's intervention, and the Supreme God, with a thunderbolt, hurls the offending charioteer to destruction.

Then headlong down, his auburn hair ablaze
With flame, crashed Phaëthon, and trailed in air
A track of light, as mayhap seems a star
From heaven to fall, e'en if it falleth not.
His body, reeking from the three-forked flash,
Found from the Naiads of Hesperia
Fit sepulture, and on his tomb was graved:
"Here lieth Phaëthon, the charioteer
Of his sire's car, which, though he failed to steer,
Yet failed he nobly from the want of fear."

ECHO AND NARCISSUS

Narcissus was a handsome but unimpressionable youth. One day the prattling nymph, Echo, saw him hunting deer and fell in love with him.

She follows her Narcissus stealthily,
And as she follows, grows the more aflame,
Like the live sulphur smeared on torches' ends
That kindleth at the touch of fire. How oft
She longed with winning word to greet him, or
To utter prayer of love; but nature warred

The thought down, nor would let a maid begin.
Yet—what she may do—she will wait his call,
Ready with her responsive words. By chance
The youth one day was parted from his troop
And shouted "Ho! is no one near?" "One near,"
Fair Echo answered. In surprise he gazed
All round; then cried "Come here!" "Come here!" she called.
Again he looks, and none appearing, shouts
"Why do you hide from me?" The self-same words
Come back. Yet he persists—"O let us meet!"
Echo repeated sounds than which she could
Hear none more sweet, and suiting deed to word,
Ran from the wood to clasp him in her arms.
He fled, and, as he fled, "Keep off!" he cried,
"Death take me e'er thou mayest have my love!"
"Thou mayest have my love!" was her reply.

Scorned by him, Echo pines away for unrequited love, wasting into thin air, till only voice and bones are left.

The voice remaineth: legend saith the bones
Took on themselves the texture of the rocks.

But retribution awaited Narcissus. The prayer had been uttered that he might also be possessed by love hopelessly beyond all chance of return. It so happened that one day, wearied with the chase, the youth lay down beside a spring of sparkling water, silvery-clear in the midst of the green forest. Here he was destined to fall in love with his own reflection.

He yearned to quench his thirst: thirst grew afresh:
He drank, love-smitten with the image seen,
Enamoured of a bodiless hope. It looked
As if the water were alive. Himself,
In love with his own self, lay there unmoved
Of gaze, like Parian marble statuesque;
And saw, as in a mirror, two sweet eyes,
His own reflected, as it might be stars;
Saw locks for Bacchus or Apollo's fit,

Saw his smooth cheeks and ivory neck and charm
Of face, where snowy whiteness mixed with red:
Unwitting he desires himself, and is
His own admirer, wooed and wooing too.

It is now his turn to waste away, slowly consumed by a passion for an unattainable beauty, which the waters always seem to sever from him. He becomes a mere shadow of his former self, and moves even the pity of Echo whom he spurned. She responds to his melancholy sighs and his melting words of farewell. At last the end comes.

On the green sward he laid a weary head:
Death closed the eyes that loved their owner's charm.

But when the Naiads and Dryads came to pay due funeral rites to the beautiful Narcissus,

No corse was anywhere: they found a flower
Yellow at heart with snow-white petals round.

CEYX AND HALCYONË

Once in time of trouble the prince Ceyx resolved to visit the oracle of the Clarion Apollo in quest of advice and consolation. It was with deep sorrow that his loving wife Halcyonë heard of his resolve; for she felt ominous forebodings as to the dangers of a voyage. She entreated her husband to allow her to accompany him;

But he will neither drop his purposed plan
To sail, nor let his consort share the risk.

A ship is got ready; and there are tearful leave-takings between this devoted pair.

Seeing the ship, as 'twere in prescience,
She shuddered, and 'mid rain of starting tears
Folded her husband to her, and at last
When her sad lips had faltered out "Farewell!"
She fainted in her utter agony.

After she revived, she could still see Ceyx high on the poop of the receding vessel. For a time they could wave to each other: then he ceased to be distinguishable, then too the hull, and

finally even the sails; and Halcyonë retired in sorrow to her couch. The ship soon met with a terrific storm. It battled gallantly against the sea; but at length destruction came.

Skill fails and courage sinks; as many deaths
Menace the mariners as there are waves:
One cannot check his tears; and one is mazed;
Another envies those whom burial
Awaits; another lifts his hands in prayer,
Or thinks of brother, or of parent, or
Of home and children—all that he hath left.

But Ceyx thinks only of Halcyonë, and her name is upon his lips as he fights for life amidst the wreckage. In the black night the waters at last overwhelm him, and he goes down. Meanwhile his faithful wife was offering to Juno fervent prayers for his safety; and the goddess could no longer endure that entreaties should be offered for one who had actually undergone death. Juno, therefore, determined to despatch her messenger, Iris, to the sleep-god instructing him to send a vision that shall intimate to Halcyonë the drowning of Ceyx.

Hard by the Mirk-folk is a hollow cave—
Deep hollow home and lair of lazy Sleep.
No beam of morn or noon or sundown e'er
Can enter it. Earth breathes out, blent with dark,
Her mists and gloaming of uncertain light.
No sentry chanticleer with crested head
Crows for the Dawn; no restless dog, nor goose
Yet shrewder, breaks the silence with a sound.
Wild beasts, nor cattle, nor the wind-tost bough
Nor tongue of men a-quarrelling is heard.
Dumb Quiet houseth here. Below the crag
Wells Lethe's water in a murmuring rill,
Whose slumbrous pebble-music wooes to rest.
Before the cave-mouth plenteous poppies bloom
And countless herbs whose juice dank Night extracts—
A draught to sprinkle dusky earth withal.
In the whole house there is no door to creak
On turning hinge: the threshold hath no guard.
Towers in the midst a couch of ebony,

Downy, self-coloured, draped with sable quilt:
There lies the God, his limbs in languor lapped,
And round him, aping divers shapes, recline
Vain Dreams, as many as the harvest-ears
Or forest-leaves or sands upon the shore.

Hither came Iris with Juno's behest. The sleep-god then selected Morpheus to assume the appearance of the drowned Ceyx and appear in a dream to Halcyonë.

Before the sad wife's couch he stood, his beard
Adript, and hair still wet with briny ooze.

Then he tells the story of the shipwreck; and Halcyonë's distracted cries bring her servants on the scene. Certain now of his death, and refusing all comfort, she makes her way to the seashore at daybreak, and encounters the harrowing experience of having her husband's body washed ashore beside her.

"'Tis he," she cried, and therewithal she rends
Face, hair, and raiment; then with hands outstretched
To him, "My dearest lord, oh! is it thus,"
She says—"thus, that thou dost return to me?"

Then a strange thing happens: she is miraculously changed into a bird.

Smiting thin air with pinions newly grown,
She skimmed the waves, a bird of misery.

And as she reached Ceyx's body, the gods took pity on them; for both were transformed into the halcyon birds with whom are associated the period of calm amidst the storms of winter.

In wintertide through seven peaceful days
Halcyonë upon her nest doth brood,
Upheld above the surface of the deep:
And all that time the sea-waves are at rest.

PINDAR

Odes of Victory

Olympian and Pythian Odes

NOTE.—*In condensing the longer odes, it has been impossible to keep the strophic structure. In the two short ones, however, it has been retained; these are not abridged.*

The First Olympian Ode

FOR HIERO OF SYRACUSE, WINNER IN THE HORSE RACE

WATER is best! And gold
Most excellently bright,
Amid the treasure in some lordly hold,
Burns, as a fire by night.

Pindar, "the Theban Eagle," as Gray calls him, was born about the year 522 B.C., in the village of Cynoscephalæ, near Thebes, in Bœotia. He died about 443 B.C. Of his life very little is known. His birth took place, appropriately enough, during the celebration of the Pythian games. He studied the flute under Scopelinus, who is sometimes named as his father. His teachers in poetry were the women poets, Myrto and Corinna. Although a Theban, he was always a warm friend of the Athenians, and when he celebrated Athens as the "bulwark of Hellas," the Thebans fined him. The grateful Athenians, however, paid his fine, and appointed him their consul at Thebes. Pindar's life-work was the celebration of victors in the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian games, and he has left us a legacy of song unrivalled in the lyric utterance of the world. He loved all bright and glorious things, and his lines are jewelled with allusions to water, fire, and gold. He loved, too, the sea, and seafaring, from which he drew many gorgeous metaphors. But his wealth of mythology, in which he clothed the praise of his victors, made him difficult for the general reader. This epitome has been prepared from the original text. The finest English prose version, perhaps, is that of the late Ernest Myers.

But, dear my heart,
If thou dost crave a part
Of glory in the games—
Even as the sun-orb flames
In the wide æther, star pre-eminent
Of day, and quickening spring;
So surely, voice of man
No higher theme may sing
Than that high strife, the strife Olympian:
Whence harmonies are blent
With multitudinous utterance in the mind
Of mortals skilled to raise
Of Kronos' son the praise;
When to the happy hearth,
That knows no dearth,
They come, the hearth of Hiero, who wields
The rod of Justice o'er Sicilian fields,
Where many flocks their pasture find.
There choicest fruits he culls of excellence,
And music's eloquence
With glory wreathes the fame
Of that high lord:
Such be the lays we frame,
Banqueting blithely round a friendly board.
Come, take the Dorian lute
Down from the peg, if aught
Thou'rt touched with gladdest thought
Of that swift steed
Pherenikos, whose foot
Was first at Pisa, where his speed
Outran Alpheos' waves, when he,
Ungoaded, bent him to the course
And crowned with victory
His lord of Syracuse, who glories in the horse.
Bright his fame
In Lydian Pelops' colony, the place
Where men of goodly race

Were set by him who caught in love's allure
Mighty Poseidon, the earth-shaking one;
Who looked, and was undone
When Klotho from the vessel pure
Drew Pelops, bright with ivory-shouldered grace.
Marvels be many, ay, with cunning plan
The tale adorned may overpass the truth;
And thus, ah ruth!
To falsehood turns the speech of man.
Charis, that fashioneth
For mortals every pleasant thing,
To these such honour rendereth,
Making the false appear the true.
But days that shall hereafter rise
Are of the issue witnesses most wise.
Seemly it is for man
To speak immortals fair:
Of old a story ran
How Tantalus devised to share
His Pelops' flesh among his guests;
Not so I read the tale: 'twas Love's behests
That moved the Trident-bearer glorious
To steal thee, Pelops, and with golden speed
Of steeds to bear thee to the father's house;
Where, on the self-same need,
In aftertime came ravished Ganymede.
Far be it from my mind
To call a blessed god devourer of his kind.
From this I will refrain,
Since evil-speakers win but scanty gain.
If ever mortal wight,
Had honour in Olympus' sight,
That man was Tantalus, but he
Swelled with crude pride, and now must ever dread
The threatening rock that swings above his head.

But back the immortals sent his son,
With mortal men again to share
Their fleeting lot, and ere he won
The bloom of early manhood fair,
His thoughts to wedlock turned,
And to Poseidon rose his prayer,
If ere for Cyprus' gifts the god had burned,
To grant the maid of glory rare,
Hippodameia, for his bride.
"Hard is the task," he cried,
"Since many a suitor for her sake has died
Beneath her father Œnomaus' spear:
But death awaits us all,
Why then deny the call
To strife, and sit inactive here?
But to endure
Eld nameless and obscure."
Whereat the god, right joyfuly,
To Pelops lent a golden-wingèd car
Whose steeds untiring bore him far
To Œnomaus, whom he overcame,
Winning the maid and sons of doughty fame.
And now beside Alpheos' wave
He rests, and there his honoured grave
Is drenched by strangers with blood-offerings;
And from afar his vision wings
To catch the glory of Olympian strife,
Those courses Pelops names;
But he that conquers in the games
Leads evermore a tranquil life.
The blessing of to-day
Man ever counts supreme;
For Hiero must I wreathe my lay;
Æolian be the mode, and steeds the theme.
A host more wise, a host more strong,
The glorious mazes of my song
Shall never find to celebrate;

But loftier hymns await
Thy prowess, noble Hiero,
If but the god, thy guardian, show
Himself propitious to thy hope,
I'll raise for thee a sweeter strain,
When, guided by the god, I gain
Kronion's bright far-shining slope.
My keenest dart of song is still in store.
Mortal renown is manifold,
But kings the loftiest portion hold;
Thou, therefore, king, look not for more;
But be it thine the highest path to tread,
And mine with victors to commune, and shed
New honours on my art, where'er the race
Of Greeks hath found a dwelling-place.

The First Pythian Ode

FOR HIERO OF ÆTNA, WINNER OF THE CHARIOT RACE

O golden Lyre, Apollo's treasure,
His, and the Muses', violet-tressed,
That rul'st the dancers' festal pleasure,
In quivering preludes to the choir addressed;
How do thy tones allay the furious levin,
And quench its darting will,
And shed soft spells upon the bird of heaven,
Throned on Jove's sceptre, to distil
Darkling, a mist upon his archèd crest,
Till, gently heaving to thy throbbing measure,
He sinks to rest?
And Ares also lets the spear lie idle
For joy of thee, sith Phœbus' skill
And the deep-bosomed Muses bridle
The rage of god-head, at their will.
But whatsoever thing Zeus hateth
Flees, nerveless, from the voice Pierian,

Whether by land or raging sea it waiteth-
As he, that erst in den Kilikian,
Bred many names, but now lies helpless bound
'Neath Ætna's skyward pillar, snowy-crowned:
Whence from the depths well purest fonts of fire,
By day-time smoking lurid, but by night
Red rolling flames and molten rocks conspire
To whelm the sea with uproar and affright.
'Tis dragon Typhon makes the flood to flow
'Twixt Ætna's brow dark-wooded and the plain
Fast bound; that monster trembling travellers know,
All racked and furrowed by his bed of pain.
O Zeus, the warden of this mount, whose name
That neighbour city wears, which Hiero
Hath late ennobled, aid me to proclaim
His prowess where the Pythian chariots go!
Sweet to the sailor is the prosperous gale
That speeds him seaward, whispering augury
Of fortunate return: and thus we hail
By conquest past, new conquests yet to be
For Ætna's steeds proclaimed in festal melody.
Phœbus, of Lycia and of Delos lord,
That on Parnassus lov'st Castalia's spring,
Be this thy purpose, to afford
This land fair sons, and him whose praise I sing.
Good luck for evermore, and let my lay
Surpass all rival minstrelsy, nor stray,
Like spear undeftly hurled, beyond the ring.

Like Philoctetes, late to war he sped,
And proud hearts sought of him a boon;
May Heaven accomplish soon
All Hiero's desire, and shed
Guidance upon him for the days to be;
And may the Muse grant grace to me
Beneath thy roof, Deinomenes, to hymn
Thy father's victory with the four-horsed car;

Sith his renown can never dim
Thy joy, nor cross it with an alien star.
O son of Kronos, be it thine,
To lull the Tuscan and Phœnician roar
Of war at home, since they have seen their line
Of insolent ships on the Cumæan shore
Shattered the Syracusan chief before,
When overboard he hurled into the sea
The foeman's youthful flower, to set our Hellas free.
Thanks shall I win from Athens, when I tell
In song of Salamis; and from Sparta's town
For singing of the battle that befell
Before Kithairon, where the Medes went down;
For all their might of bended bows;
But here, where Himera's fair-banked water flows
Deinomenes' sons shall thank me for the lay
I pour, in honour of the stubborn blows
Their valour dealt, the foe to disarray.

If thou the word in season briefly frame,
Thou hast the least reproach, yet, Hiero,
Slip not the fair occasion, for thy name
Is meet for envy, not for pity; so
With Justice' rudder guide
Thy people; and thy sword
Of speech on guileless anvil smite
For potent is the word
That falls from thee, however light.
Steward art thou of much: on either side
By many witnesses thy deeds are tried.
In good report abide;
Yet not too careful of the cost,
Flying free thy sails and wide—
A seaman skilled to note the wind and tide.
Nor be thy judgment lost
Amid time-serving words of guile;

For what will aye endure,
Inspiring history and song,
Is that a man was pure
Or evil. Ah, the wrong
Wrought by the brazen bull, that fiery wile
Of cruel Phalaris, with hate is told.
His praise nor lutes nor young-voiced choirs unfold
In hall for gentle fellowship arrayed;
But Crœsus' loving kindness shall not fade.
Joy is the chiefest prize
Of life; the next, renown
But whoso grasps the twain allies
Hath won the highest crown.

The Fourth Pythian Ode

FOR ARKESILAS OF KYRENE, WINNER IN THE CHARIOT RACE

Muse, let the gale of music swell
While thou to-day a guest dost dwell
With him who in Kyrene reigns,
Kyrene, famed for flowing manes
Of horses goodly in the race.
'Tis Leto's children's due,
And Pytho's too;
For she who sits at Pytho old,
Apollo's priestess, once foretold
How Battos should in Libya rear
The city of the charioteer,
And so in after time fulfil
The Colchian queen, Medea's will.
For she to Jason's crew foretold
That deep the Libyan soil should hold
A root of cities manifold,
Peopled by heroes skilled and bold

To speed the whirlwind-footed car
And win the prize of peaceful war—
A race from Argonaut Euphemos sprung,
He whom a god approached, what time they hung
Against fleet Argo's side
Her bronze-flecked bridle. Pride
Was in his mien and grace informed his speech.
While from the beach
He to Euphemos gave a clod of earth,
As earnest of the hearth
His line should found
In the wide Libyan ground.
So rhythmic ran Medea's utterance,
And in a silent trance
The godlike heroes bowed their heads to hear
Now to Arkesilas, Kyrene's king,
Eighth in descent from Battos, will I sing,
For lo! his leaf is green
And lately have we seen
Him take the victor's place
Over Amphictyons in the chariot race.
The story of his line,
That first won glory in the quest
Of the all-golden fleece, be mine
To tell, how Jason came, unwelcome guest,
Wearing one sandal, fateful sign
To him that ruled Iolkos' sunny land.
So, in time's fulness, there he came,
Wielding two spears, a man all glorious—
Twofold his vesture; see, his shapely limbs
Close-fitting garments of Magnesia house.
But over all a pelt of pard,
The hissing showers to ward.
No shears his glory dims,
But rippling ran
His locks adown his back's broad span.
Ay, dauntless-souled he strode along

And took his stand
There in the market-place, amid the thickest throng.
At Pelias' call
To seek the fleece he sailed,
He and his heroes all, to their high purpose nailed
With bolts of adamant.
And see! their oars they plant
Deep in the surge, obedient to the sign
Vouchsafed by Zeus divine;
For favouring thunder peals from heaven as they,
Untiring, through the ocean cleave their way.
Now, wafted by the south,
They reach the Axine mouth,
And to Poseidon rear a shrine.
To Colchis next they came,
Where the keen Cyprian's flame
Maddened Medea's heart
With longing to depart
Again to Hellas, where
With Jason she might share
The joys of wedlock sweet.
Him then with heart discreet
She taught the way to win
The golden fleece, and meet
The toilsome tasks wherein
Her father sought the hero to defeat:
But, flinging back his saffron cloak,
He bent the fiery bulls beneath the yoke,
And ploughed Poseidon's field.
Medea next revealed
The secret of the fleece concealed
In darkling wood and dragon-guarded; lo!
The path is long to show—
My time is out, and others wait my skill:
A shorter track, Arkesilas, I know—
The speckled snake by subtlety he slew,
Then, with his hero crew,

Bearing the fleece and dark Medea too,
To Ocean's deep they hied
And wandered far and wide.
Where high the Red Sea ran
They sojourned, and with women Lemnian,
The husband-slaying race,
They tarried for a space.
There, in a stranger womb
Was sown the fateful seed,
Whence brightest fortunes bloom
For thy renowned breed;
And Thera's isle they won,
When Leto's son
Gave to thy line the Libyan plain,
And bade them in Kyrene reign:
Kyrene of the golden throne
With truthful counsels evermore they own.
Arkesilas, physician skilled, be strong
To serve thy city, since not long
For men is opportunity,
And wise is he
Who marks the moment to redress a wrong.
They say the sorest in his heart
Who, knowing good, therein doth lack a part.
In this thy city fair
Demophilos, thy brother, hath no share.
Even so is exiled Atlas bent
Beneath the ponderous firmament;
Yet Zeus in time set free
The Titans, and as sailors see
The breeze abate, and shift their sails,
So in good hour with hopeful gales
Demophilos shall homeward hie,
Peace and the joy of youthful hearts to know,
Beside Apollo's fount to feast, and ply
His carven lute, and tell
What fair and springing well

Of deathless verse, Arkesilas, he made
For thee to flow,
When he of late a guest at Thebæ stayed.

The Ninth Pythian Ode

FOR TELESIKRATES OF KYRENE, WINNER OF THE FOOT RACE IN FULL ARMOUR

By the deep-vested Graces' aid
I seek to sing a victor's fame;
How Telesikrates, arrayed
With brazen shield, to Pytho came,
And there with victory crowned
Kyrene's city for the car renowned.
Once on a day from Pelion's windy dells
Apollo stole the huntress maid
Kyrene, and the gentle spells
Of Aphrodite on her laid;
For when he spied her struggling sore
With a dread lion, unafraid,
Amazed, he asked of Cheiron hoar:
"What man begat, what country bore
This girl by terrors undismayed?
And were it meet," he asked, "in bridal bower
To pluck so fresh, so sweet a flower?"
To him replied the Centaur mild,
And frankly as he spoke he smiled:
"Ah, secret are the keys
Persuasion holds of love's own sanctities
Even gods account it shame
With freedom to proclaim
The earliest marriage joy.
But, Phœbus, why employ
Dissembled speech, and ask
Of me the maiden's line?
For thee 'twere easy task,
Since thou, a god divine,

Hast perfect skill of all
That's past or may befall;
The sands thou numberest,
The winds' and waves' unrest,
Alike to thee is known:
I cannot match thy might,
Yet hear my word forthright.
To wed this maid you came.
From her a city's fame
Shall spring in days to be
When she shall dwell with thee
In Libya, and bear
A son, whom for a care
The Hours and Earth shall take
From Hermes' hand and make
Him god-like with the meat
Of gods, ambrosia sweet.
As Zeus or Phœbus fair,
A triple name he'll wear:
As Agreus, Nomios
Or Aristæus, loss
From shepherds shall he ward,
The flocks' especial guard."
On this, Apollo sped
To grace the bridal bed,
And in a golden dome
They set their Libyan home;
Where now Kyrene dwells,
And her own city names.
For beauty it excels
And glories in the games.
And now at Pytho's shrine
The Delphic honours shine
On Telesikrates,
Karneadas' own son,
Whose victories
But lately won

Have published broad the fame
Of blest Kyrene's name.
Full many a maiden's eyes
At Pallas' feast have seen
Thee winner of the prize;
And oft the damsels prayed, I ween,
That theirs a son might be,
Or husband like to thee.
Olympia, too, is bright,
And Delphi with thy might.
But thy forefathers' fame
Again I must proclaim;
How, when the suitors came
For Libya's maid aflame,
To woo Antaios' child, the lovely-haired,
Her father straight prepared,
Like Danaos, a race,
And bade the wooers pace
Towards the goal at speed,
The goal that was indeed
The maid herself, who stayed,
In glorious robes arrayed,
Her coming lord to greet.
Alexidamos then
With footsteps fleet
Outpaced the rest, and when
His course was run complete,
He took the maiden's hand
And led her through the band
Of Nomad horsemen, who upon his head
The wreaths and plumes of all his victories shed.

The Fifth Nemean Ode

FOR PYTHEAS OF ÆGINA, WINNER IN THE BOYS' PANCRATION

STROPHE: No image-maker I,
Well skilled to plan
Forms on their pedestals immutably
Established. But on every merchantman
And passage-shallop from Ægina's town,
O sweet my song, beat forth and spread the news
How Pytheas, Lampon's son, of sturdy thews,
Won at Nemea the pankratiast's crown,
Ere on his cheek midsummer taught to cling
The vine-flower mother's tender burgeoning.
Such honour hath he brought
To them of Kronos and of Zeus begot,
The spear-armed heroes, and the seed
Whom Nereus' golden daughters bore,
He honoureth, and evermore
His honours honours yield
Unto the mother city, friendly field
To strangers. Ay, they prayed, the men of yore,
That she might ever breed
A goodly race, on ship-board famed;
And stretching heavenward serried hands, they named
Hellanian Zeus, whose altar flamed
Beside the glorious sons of Endeïs there,
And Phokos' royal might,
Whom Psamatheia bright
Upon the sea-beach whilom bare.
I count it shame
Their dreadful act to name,
The deed defying justice which they dared:
How they forsook the isle of goodly fame,
What fate constrained the heroes, when they fared
Forth from Œnone. Here I pause, mid-song,
Nor will the tale prolong.

Not every truth its perfect face may show,
And wisest counsels oft in silence go.
ANTISTROPHE: But if it be my will
Good luck to praise,
Or steel-clad war, or dextrous skill
Of hand, let one be swift to trace
A line for me, to mark my forward spring;
Nimble my knees, and e'en the farthest place
O'erseas is won by beat of eagle's wing.
With like goodwill the Muses' lovely choir
To the Aiakidai in Pelion sang;
While in the midst Apollo's seven-toned lyre
Beneath his golden plectrum rang,
Leading the ever-changing strain.
And first to Zeus the hymn he raised,
Then Thetis, daughter of the main,
And Peleus next in song he praised,
Whom soft Hippolyté
Was fain to tangle in her wile
And taught her lord with words of guile
How Peleus would betray
His bed; but Peleus said her nay,
For that he feared the wrath of the high Lord
Who guards the stranger at the board.
When this from his high seat the Heavenly King,
The cloud-compeller, saw,
Even Zeus, who gives the law
To host and guest, he swore to bring
A Nereid bright
With golden distaff dight
Up from the ocean, Peleus' bride to be.
What his nod promised straightway Zeus fulfilled;
For thereto he persuaded, as he willed,
Poseidon, kin to him by marriage ties,
Him that from Aigai hies
Oft to the Dorian Isthmus, where the reed
Flutes welcome, and lithe limbs the contest speed.

EPODE: Man's fate, his twin,
His every act ordains
And goddess victory within
Her soft embrace constrains
Euthymenes, who at Ægina won
His meed in subtle hymns of praise;
And thou, O Pytheas, son
Of the same stock, hast run
Thy kinsman close in honour's ways.
Nemea yields him fame,
Likewise the month his fatherland
Calls by Apollo's Delphian name.
The youthful hero band
Who sought his prowess to withstand
At home he overcame, and proved his skill
No less at Nisos' pleasant-gladed hill.
Glad am I
That all the citizens in prowess vie.
Know thou, it was Menander's aid
That won for thee requital sweet
Of labour, and I count it meet
That one who hath such athletes made,
Thy trainer, should from Athens hail.
But hearken, wouldst thou sing
Themistios' fame, let not thy spring
Of song be frozen; bid it flow
Loud-sounding; hoist the sail
Up to the high top-gallant, for the tale
Of his twofold renown,
The boxer's and pankratiast's crown
At Epidauros, when with fair
Fresh wreaths to Aiakos' gates they brought him down,
The Graces glorious with their yellow hair.

The Second Isthmian Ode

FOR XENOCRATES OF AGRIGENTUM, WINNER IN THE CHARIOT RACE

STROPHE: O Thrasyboulos, they of old
Who yoked the Muses' car of gold,
Speeding the glorious lyre to greet,
Lightly shot forth their arrowy song
That moved with dulcet voice along
In praise of boys, whose loveliness
Of early bloom, as summer sweet,
Woke fair-throned Aphrodite's dear distress
In wooer's heart. Ah, then no hireling Muse
Was honey-voiced Terpsichore, to sell
Her tender songs with silvered face;
But now she will not aught refuse
Of heed to him of Argive race,
Who, reft of goods and friends as well,
Spake thus (and scarce from truth his utterance strayed):
"By money, money man is made."
Wise art thou. Therefore, 'tis no unknown thing
The Isthmian victory I sing,
Which to Xenocrates Poseidon gave
By might of coursers brave,
And sent to him, to bind his hair withal,
A parsley wreath, the Dorian coronal.

ANTISTROPHE: A goodly charioteer was he,
Of Agrigentine folk the light,
Precious in the far-darter's sight;
For eke at Krisa gloriously
Apollo favoured him, what time he won
The crowns in Athens, bright of name,
The Erechtheidais' gift; nor did he blame
Nikomachus, whose chariot-saving hand,
Well skilled to guide the steed,
Bare full on all the reins at need.

Him, too, the Elean heralds who proclaimed
The seasonable truce of Kronos' son,
Acknowledged, and with dulcet breath they framed
Fair greeting to their whilom host, who fell
At golden Victory's knees within their land,
The holy grove, as mortals tell,
Of Zeus Olympic, whence eternal shine
The honours which Ainesidamos' line
Won there. For, truly to the triumph-song
No stranger is thy hall,
O Thrasyboulos; there sweet music's fall
And pleasant shouts the victor's fame prolong.
EPODE: No uphill path, no sloping steep
Opposes him who seeks to lead
The Heliconian maiden's meed
Of honour, company to keep
With famous men. Ah, let me throw
My quoit as far as he did go
Beyond all men, Xenocrates, I trow,
In sweet yet fiery temper. Reverence
Attended him in holding conference
With citizens. True Greek, he bred the steed
After the Grecian wont, and paid due heed
To holy feasts; nor ever did the gale
That breathed around his hospitable board
Give cause to shorten sail:
His bark to Phasis summer winds would bring,
And Nilewards lay his winter voyaging.
Now let not Thrasyboulos grudge to sing
His father's prowess, as my hymns record.
Let him not spurn my songs, through jealous thought
That haunts mankind. These lays were never wrought
For idleness. Such message give my friend
When, Nikesippos, next thou shalt on him attend.

ALEXANDER POPE

An Essay on Man

In four epistles to Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke

Epistle I

Of the Nature and State of Man with Respect to the Universe

Awake, my St. John! Leave all meaner things
To low ambition and the pride of kings.
Let us (since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us, and to die)
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;
A mighty maze! but not without a plan.
Of systems possible, if 'tis confest,

Alexander Pope, English poet and satirist, was born in London, the son of a linen-draper, on May 21, 1688. His education was outwardly desultory, but from his earliest years the boy had given himself to study, and at fourteen years of age he wrote a poem, in translation from the "Thebais" of Statius, which received considerable attention. A friendship with Wycherley, the dramatist, led to his acquaintance with Addison, Swift, and other foremost writers of the time, and the publication of his "Essay on Criticism" in 1711, a work of astonishing epigrammatic power, established his brilliant reputation. After many other poems, Pope undertook two great labours—the translations of the "Iliad," published from 1715 to 1720, and of the "Odyssey," in which he was assisted by collaborators, published in 1725 and 1726. Hereupon followed incomplete portions of the great didactic work which Pope had undertaken at Bolingbroke's suggestion, namely, the "Essay on Man," published in 1732 to 1734. It belongs to the same category as Butler's "Analogy"—an attempt to place eighteenth-century religion on a rational basis. Its orthodoxy was attacked and defended with unusual vigour, one Swiss professor proclaiming Pope a professional ally of the free-thinkers. With equal emphasis were the literary merits of the work discussed. Pope died on May 30, 1744.

That Wisdom infinite must form the best;
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man,
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, if God has placed him wrong?

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god;
Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's use and end.

Heaven from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
All but the page prescribed, their present state;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
Or who could suffer being here below?

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher, Death; and God adore.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never IS but always TO BE blest.

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears Him in the wind;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way;
Yet simple Nature to his hope has given,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heaven;
Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,
Some happier island in the watery waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.

Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense
Weigh thy opinion against Providence;
Call imperfection what thou fanciest such;
Say, here He gives too little, there too much:
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
Yet cry, If man's unhappy, God's unjust.

Ask for what end the heavenly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use? Pride answers, "'Tis for mine;

For me kind Nature wakes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flower;
For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;
For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies."
But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
"No" ('tis replied), "the first Almighty Cause
Acts not by partial, but by general laws."
As much that end a constant course requires
Of showers and sunshine, as of man's desires;
As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
As men for ever temperate, calm, and wise.
Far as creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental powers ascends:
Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race,
From the green myriads in the peopled grass:
What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line;
How instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,
Compared, half-reasoning elephant, with thine!
'Twixt that and reason what a nice barrier:
For ever separate, yet for ever near!
What if the foot, ordained the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspired to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repined
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another, in this general frame;
Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains
The great Directing Mind of all ordains.
All are but parts of one stupendous whole,

Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.
Cease then, nor order imperfection name:
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good.
And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.

Epistle II

Of the Nature and State of Man with Respect to Himself as an Individual

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is man.
Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!
Two principles in human nature reign:
Self-love, to urge, and Reason, to restrain;
Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,
Each works its end, to move or govern all:
And to their proper operation still,
Ascribe all good; to their improper, ill.
Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.
Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And, but for this, were active to no end.
Modes of self-love the passions we may call;
'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all;

But since not every good we can divide,
And reason bids us for our own provide;
Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,
List under reason, and deserve her care;
Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,
Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.

Passions, like elements, though born to fight,
Yet, mixed and softened, in God's work unite:
These 'tis enough to temper and employ;
But what composes man, can man destroy?
Suffice that reason keep to Nature's road,
Subject, compound them, follow her and God.

Pleasures are ever in our hands and eyes;
And when in act they cease, in prospect rise:
All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;
On different senses, different objects strike;
And hence one master passion in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

Nature its mother, habit is its nurse;
Wit, spirit, faculties but make it worse;
Reason itself but gives it edge and power,
As Heaven's blest beam turns vinegar more sour.

Th' eternal art, educing good from ill,
Grafts on this passion our best principle.
'Tis thus the mercury of man is fixed,
Strong grows the virtue with his nature mixed;
The dross cements what else were too refined,
And in one interest body acts with mind.

Thus Nature gives us (let it check our pride)
The virtue nearest to our vice allied:
Reason the bias turns to good from ill,
And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.
The fiery soul, abhorred in Catiline,
In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine:
The same ambition can destroy or save,
And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,

That vice or virtue there is none at all.
If white and black blend, soften, and unite
A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;
'Tis to mistake them, cost the time and pain.
  Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
But where th' extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed:
Ask where's the north? At York, 'tis on the Tweed;
In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there,
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
  Heaven forming each on other to depend,
A master, or a servant, or a friend,
Bids each on other for assistance call,
Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.
Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
The common interest, or endear the tie.
  Whate'er the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,
Not one will change his neighbour with himself.
The learn'd is happy Nature to explore,
The fool is happy that he knows no more;
The rich is happy in the plenty given,
The poor contents him with the care of Heaven.
See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
The sot a hero, lunatic a king;
The starving chemist in his golden views
Supremely blest, the poet in his muse.
See some strange comfort every state attend,
And pride bestowed on all, a common friend:
See some fit passion every age supply;
Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.

Epistle III

Of the Nature and State of Man with Respect to Society

Look round our world; behold the chain of love
Combining all below and all above.
See plastic Nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend,
Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Formed and impelled its neighbour to embrace.
See matter next, with various life endued,
Press to one centre still, the general good.
Grant that the powerful still the weak control;
Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole:
Nature that tyrant checks; he only knows,
And helps, another creature's wants and woes.
Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods,
To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods;
For some his interest prompts him to provide,
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride:
That very life his learned hunger craves,
He saves from famine, from the savage saves;
Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,
And, till he ends the being, makes it blest.
Whether with reason or with instinct blest,
Know, all enjoy that power which suits them best;
To bliss alike by that direction tend,
And find the means proportioned to their end.
Say, where full instinct is th' unerring guide,
What pope or council can they need beside?
God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds:
But as he framed a whole, the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness.
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, till two are one.
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace;

They love themselves, a third time, in their race.
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the interest and the love.
  See man from Nature rising slow to Art!
To copy instinct then was reason's part:
Thus then to man the voice of Nature spake:
"Go, from the creatures thy instructions take:
The arts of building from the bee receive;
Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave;
Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
Here, too, all forms of social union find,
And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind:
Here subterranean works and cities see;
There towns aërial on the waving tree.
Learn each small people's genius, policies,
The ants' republic, and the realm of bees;
How those in common all their wealth bestow,
And anarchy without confusion know;
And these for ever, though a monarch reign,
Their separate cells and properties maintain."
  Great Nature spoke; observant man obeyed;
Cities were built, societies were made:
Here rose one little state, another near
Grew by like means, and joined through love or fear.
Thus states were formed; the name of king unknown,
Till common interest placed the sway in one.
  So drives self-love through just and through unjust,
To one man's power, ambition, lucre, lust:
The same self-love, in all, becomes the cause
Of what restrains him, government and laws.
How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake,
A weaker may surprise, a stronger take?
His safety must his liberty restrain:
All join to guard what each desires to gain.
Forced into virtue thus by self-defence,
Ev'n kings learned justice and benevolence:

Self-love forsook the path it first pursued,
And found the private in the public good.
'Twas then the studious head or generous mind,
Follower of God, or friend of human kind,
Poet or patriot, rose but to restore
The faith and moral Nature gave before;
Re-lumed her ancient light, not kindled new;
If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:
Taught power's due use to people and to kings,
Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings,
The less, or greater, set so justly true,
That touching one must strike the other too;
Till jarring interests of themselves create
Th' according music of a well-mixed state.
For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administered is best:
For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.
All must be false that thwart this one great end;
And all of God, that bless mankind, or mend.

Epistle IV

Of the Nature and State of Man with Respect to Happiness

O happiness! our being's end and aim!
Good, pleasure, ease, content! whate'er thy name:
That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die,
Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,
O'erlooked, seen double, by the fool and wise:
Plant of celestial seed! if dropped below,
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
Ask of the learn'd the way? The learn'd are blind:
This bids to serve and that to shun mankind;

Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,
Those call it pleasure, and contentment these:
Some, sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;
Some, swelled to gods, confess ev'n virtue vain;
Or, indolent, to each extreme they fall,
To trust in everything, or doubt of all.

Order is Heaven's first law; and, this confest,
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,
More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence
That such are happier, shocks all common sense.

Oh blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,
Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe!
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.
But fools, the good alone, unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all.

Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?
On air or sea new motions be imprest,
O blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?
When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?
Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,
For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?

"But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed."
What then? Is the reward of virtue bread?
That vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil;
The knave deserves it when he tills the soil;
The knave deserves it when he tempts the main,
Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.
The good man may be weak, be indolent;
Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul's calm sunshine, and the heartfelt joy,
Is virtue's prize: a better would you fix?
Then give humility a coach and six,
Justice a conqueror's sword, or truth a gown,

Or public spirit its great cure, a crown.
Weak, foolish man! will Heaven reward us there
With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?
The boy and man an individual makes,
Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?
  Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
Fortune in men has some small difference made,
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;
The cobbler aproned, and the parson gowned,
The friar hooded, and the monarch crowned.
"What differ more" (you cry) "than crown and cowl?"
I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool.
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,
Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow,
The rest is all but leather or prunella.
  What's fame? A fancied life in others' breath,
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.
All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes or friends.
A wit's a feather, and a chief a rod:
An honest man's the noblest work of God.
  In parts superior what advantage lies?
Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise?
'Tis but to know how little can be known;
To see all others' faults and feel our own;
Condemned in business or in arts to drudge,
Without a second, or without a judge:
Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land?
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
Painful pre-eminence! yourself to view
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.
  Know then this truth (enough for man to know)
"Virtue alone is happiness below."
The only point where human bliss stands still,
And tastes the good without the fall to ill;

Where only merit constant pay receives,
Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;
Never elated while one man's oppressed,
Never dejected while another's blest.
  Self-love thus pushed to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.
Is this too little for the boundless heart?
Extend it, let thy enemies have part:
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence.

JEAN RACINE

Bérénice

Persons in the Play

TITUS, *Emperor of Rome*
BÉRÉNICE, *Queen of Palestine*
ANTIOCHUS, *King of Commagene*
PAULINUS, *confidant of Titus*
ARSACES, *confidant of Antiochus*
PHÉNICE, *confidant of Bérénice*
RUTILIUS, *a Roman*

The scene is at Rome, in a cabinet between the apartments of Titus and those of Bérénice.

ACT I

ANTIOCHUS (*addressing Arsaces*): Stay one moment. I see plainly, Arsaces, that the pomp of these places is new to your eyes. This superb and solitary cabinet is the depository of the secrets of Titus. Here from time to time he conceals himself from the distractions of the court, when he comes to profess his love to the queen.

Jean Racine still stands at the head of French masters of the serious drama. He is to tragedy what Molière is to comedy. Born at La Ferté-Milon on December 21, 1639, his youth was passed under the influence of the Port Royal recluses, and in their famous retreat the pious scholars did much to indoctrinate him with ideas which, though not seeming to take effect at the time, exercised wonderful influence later on. He quickly distinguished himself as a student by his rapid attainments in Creek, and at the same time to some extent employed himself in versification. Racine entered the Collège d'Harcourt, desiring especially to undertake a course in logic and metaphysics, but before long he settled down to the regular composition of dignified and stately historical and sacred dramas which, by their exquisite beauty of style and felicitous phraseology, stand unrivalled in

Yonder door leads to her apartments. Go to her, and say that I earnestly beg a private interview with her.

ANTIOCHUS (*left alone and soliloquising*): Now, Antiochus, art thou always the same? Can I with trembling say to her "I love you"? But what! I am trembling already, and dread the moment of meeting with her, for which I have so long wished. She imposed on me an eternal silence, and I have been silent for five years. Am I to imagine that she will be more willing than she was in Palestine to listen to my overtures of affection, now that Titus destines her to supreme elevation? He is about to wed her. Have I then waited till such a moment as this in order once again to come to declare myself her lover? What will such a rash avowal avail? Since I must depart, it were better to go without displeasing her. But, O lovely queen, why should you be offended? Instead of being offended, she will pity me. And what has a lover to fear who cherishes no hope, and who is resolved never to look upon her face again?

ARSACES (*returning*): My lord, I have seen the queen, but only after pressing through crowds of people who are attracted by her approaching greatness. Titus has just ceased weeping during eight days of retreat while mourning the death of his father, Vespasian. And now he will appear again in the guise of lover. If we may credit the gossip of the court, my lord, the happy Bérénice will before this night have changed the title of queen for that of empress.

ANTIOCHUS: Alas! And thus can I not see her without the presence of others?

ARSACES: Bérénice is ready to see you alone. Doubtless she will be glad to escape awhile from the oppressive

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the French language. He died on April 26, 1699. "Bérénice," produced in 1670, well exhibits Racine's peculiar genius. The piece may lack the impassioned energy of Corneille, but is unapproachable in its combination of majesty and tenderness and in the fine rhetoric of heroic declamation on the part of the characters.

scenes of the court. And, my lord, I have followed all your instructions. War galleys are at Ostia, ready to leave the coast at a moment's notice. But whom are you sending back to Commagene?

ANTIOCHUS: I am going myself. On leaving the palace, I leave Rome, and leave it for ever.

ARSACES: You are going? And why? What caprice renders you an enemy to yourself? Heaven has placed on the throne a prince who loves you, and who in times past witnessed those combats in which he saw you seeking glory or death in his footsteps; while, seconded by your splendid valour, he at length brought rebellious Judea under the yoke of Rome. Titus forgets not that fateful day when you seemed doomed to certain death as you scaled the walls of the besieged city and were hailed conqueror by the whole camp. And now that you should grace with your honoured presence the coming fêtes, are you determined to return to the obscurity of your country by the Euphrates, departing secretly, without waiting for the honours with which Titus would surely load you, in the view of all the people?

ANTIOCHUS: What would you have me say? I wait only to hear my fate from the lips of Bérénice herself. If it be true that she is to be raised to the throne of the Cæsars, then I depart. When we are gone, I will tell you the rest. The queen comes. Adieu. Do all that I have said.

BÉRÉNICE (*attended by Phénice, addresses Antiochus*): My lord, I might have accused you of negligence in leaving me unsought when I should have welcomed a friend in whom to repose confidence, and to whom I might communicate my feelings, when weary of this crowd. Now that you have appeared, I may confess to you how during these last few days my eyes have been steeped in tears. For the long mourning of Titus suspended his overtures of love, and my alarm increased as the days went by lest that love had cooled. You wit-

nessed the impressive scene last night when, to second his pious solicitude, the Senate placed his father amongst the gods. And now that all filial obligations have been sacredly fulfilled, he is about to return to his duties as a lover. And even at this moment, though to me he has not made mention of the matter, he is with the Senate, convoked by his command, and amid them he is about to place on my head the crown over Arabia and Syria, the states which he has joined to Palestine. And he will presently come hither to add to my honours the title of empress.

ANTIOCHUS: And I come to wish you an eternal farewell.

BÉRÉNICE: O heavens! What language! Why farewell? Prince, you are troubled; your countenance betokens it. May I not know what this means?

ANTIOCHUS: At least remember that I obey your own wishes, and that you are listening to me for the last time. It was in your own native land that I first enjoyed your friendly regard, and loved you, with the good will of Agrippa, your brother. But, alas! Titus came, saw you, and pleased you. And, armed with Rome's irresistible force, he overwhelmed Judea, and the sad Antiochus was one of the first trophies of the conquest. Your tongue ordered mine to be silent, yet I spoke to you with my eyes, and my tears and my sighs followed you in every quarter. At length you imposed on me the choice of either exile from your presence or perpetual silence. I have kept silence, but in this final moment I dare to declare that when you exacted from me that unjust promise, my heart vowed eternal love for you.

BÉRÉNICE: My lord, I did not believe that, on the very day which is to unite my destiny with Cæsar's, any mortal could with impunity appear before my eyes to declare himself my lover. Yet because of our old friendship and your long silence I forget a speech which outrages me. I do more. I receive your farewell with regret.

Heaven knows that amid the honours I am about to receive I had expected you to be a witness of my joy. With all the world I esteemed your virtues. Titus cherished you; you admired Titus.

ANTIOCHUS: To Titus I am loyal. But I flee from him whose name you repeat each instant. And I flee from your own distracted eyes, which, ever looking on me, yet see me not. Adieu. I go with my heart too full of your image to await death while still loving you. Adieu! [*He departs.*

PHÉNICE: Madame, how I compassionate him! Such fidelity merited prosperity. Do you not pity him?

BÉRÉNICE: I confess that so sudden a retreat fills me with inward grief.

PHÉNICE: I would have detained him. For Titus has not explained his intention. Rome, madame, is regarding you with jealous eyes. The rigour of the laws terrifies me on your behalf. Hymen for a Roman only allows a Roman partner. Rome hates all kings, and Bérénice is a queen.

BÉRÉNICE: Phénice, the time for fear is past. Titus loves me; he is all-powerful, and he has only to speak. He will see the Senate pay me its homage while the people crown his image with flowers. Do you not see beforehand, Phénice, the splendour of this night—the torches, the illuminations, the eagles, the army, the crowd of tributary kings, the consuls, the Senate, and the laurels that proclaim Titus a glorious victor? But, come, let us go and thank Heaven for protecting him; then I will return, and he and I can exchange the feelings of our loving souls, which both of us have pent up so long.

ACT II

TITUS: Has anyone seen the King of Commagene? And what is Queen Bérénice doing?

PAULINUS: I saw that the king was waiting on her

in an audience, and as he came out I gave him your orders. The queen has gone to beseech Heaven for your imperial welfare.

TITUS: Alas! amiable princess.

PAULINUS: Why this sadness? The queen is about to be made mistress of all the Orient. Do you pity her?

TITUS: My plans are still uncertain, and all Rome waits to learn the destiny of the queen. She and I are the talk of the whole people. Now, Paulinus, speak out freely. Knowing as you do how the popular opinion tends, let me understand how this idea of a union between me and the queen is regarded.

PAULINUS: My emperor, there exists no doubt. Either from right reason or sheer caprice, Rome, though all confess her charms, does not expect the queen to become empress. She has a thousand virtues. She has truly the heart of a Roman. But she is a queen! Rome, by an immutable law, admits no foreign blood, and, since she banished her own kings for ever, looks on kingship with inexorable antagonism. Julius, our first Cæsar, though inflamed with passion for Cleopatra, allowed her to sigh alone in the East. Antony, who was enamoured of her to the point of idolatry, and in her bosom forgot alike his country and his glory, never dared to offer her the position of wife.

TITUS: Alas, how impassioned is the love I am thus expected to renounce! Paulinus, I have made it an indispensable pleasure of my life to see her, to love her, to please her. I have done more. I have rendered a hundred times thanks to the gods for having honoured my father by giving him the empire of the world, and for counting me worthy to follow him for whom I would willingly have given my life to prolong his. But all this glory I had fondly hoped to share with her, and to see the world at her feet as well as my own. And now, after cherishing such hopes for five long years, Paulinus, I am about—heavens, can I say so!—I am about to part

from her. But what else does supreme honour exact? What shame should I inflict on this noble queen were I to indulge my love for her by trampling on the strictest of all the laws of Rome! How cruel under its glittering name is glory! I know Bérénice, and I know too well that her heart demands nothing but mine. I loved her, I pleased her. Since that day—shall I call it blessed or fatal?—when we first acknowledged our mutual affection, she has been absorbed in this love. A stranger in Rome, unknown at the court, she passes her days, Paulinus, caring for nought except to spend an hour with me or to wait till such an hour arrives. Oh, heavens, how can I find the way to inflict on her this cruel decision? But come, it is vain to think. I know my duty; be it mine to perform it. I ask not whether I can survive the ordeal.

Bérénice enters. She gently reproaches Titus for delaying to come to see her when his audience with the Senate was over. Titus attempts to pave the way for the cruel announcement he has to make, but falters, turns away in embarrassment, which astonishes the queen, and beats a hasty retreat.

Act III

Bérénice: Ah, my lord, is it you? So you are not yet gone?

Antiochus: Madame, I perceive you are disappointed, for you were looking for Cæsar. But blame Cæsar himself for the fact that I thus once again intrude on you. Probably I should now be at Ostia but that he prohibited my departure, detaining me to talk only of you.

Bérénice: Of me, prince? And what can he have said to you?

Antiochus: In the name of the gods, madame, how can I venture to declare it? But, prepare yourself.

Titus has commanded me to tell you that which must touch you in the tenderest spot of your heart. You and Titus must separate.

BÉRÉNICE: Separate! Who—I? Titus from Bérénice?

ANTIOCHUS: I must render him justice in your presence. I have seen in him all that despair can inflict on a sensitive and generous heart. He weeps, he adores you. But what avails it that he still loves you? A queen in this Roman empire is a suspect. You must separate, and you yourself must depart to-morrow.

BÉRÉNICE: Titus to abandon me after so many vows! He who swore to me— No, I can never believe it! This is a plot to disunite us. Titus loves me. He is not willing that I should die. I will speak to him at once. Come!

ANTIOCHUS: What? You can regard me as——

BÉRÉNICE: I do not believe you. But, whatever be the fact, take care that you never see me again.

ACT IV

BÉRÉNICE: Ah, my lord! Well, then it is true that Titus abandons me? We must part. He himself commands it.

TITUS: Do not, madame, overwhelm a miserable prince! Do not afflict us both. Compel your love to be silent, and, with an eye enlightened by glory and by reason alike, contemplate my bounden duty in all its rigour. Fortify my heart yourself against you. Help me, if it be possible, to conquer my weakness, and to stay the tears which escape me without ceasing. Or if we cannot command our eyes to refrain from tears, at least let glory help us to endure our grief; for, my princess, we must part.

BÉRÉNICE: Ah, cruelty! What have you done? Alas! I believed myself loved. For you alone I lived. Did

you not know your laws when I for the first time confessed my affection? To what excess of love have you led me on? Cruel one, did you only receive my heart to fling it from you again when it had come to depend on you alone? All the empire has twenty times conspired against you. There was time enough. Why did you not leave me? Then a thousand reasons would have assuaged my misery. I could have accused of my death your father, the people, the Senate, all the Roman empire, all the universe rather than a hand so dear. Then I should not have received this cruel blow at the very moment in which I was expecting an immortal blessing—a moment, too, when your happy love can gain whatever it desires, when Rome is quiet, when your father has passed away, when all the world bows at your feet—finally, when I have none to fear but you.

TITUS: And also it is I alone who could destroy myself. I could then live on and permit myself to be seduced from the pathway of honour. I have gone on, hoping for the impossible. I only know all the torments of soul that this resolution now inflicts on me. I know not how I can live without you; but now it matters not how long I live—the only concern is to reign.

BÉRÉNICE: Reign, then, cruel one! I argue no longer. Satisfy your glory. I listen to nothing more. Adieu for ever! For ever! Ah, my lord, do you comprehend how cruel is that word when one truly loves? How much will be endured in a month, in a year? How terrible has been my error, and what pains have been thrown away! But you who abandon me are consoled in advance by your glory. The days that will seem so long to me in my grief will for you seem all too short.

TITUS: Madame, there will be but few days to count for me. I trust that ere long the sad report of my departure from earth will convince you that you have been too truly loved. You will soon know that for Titus no consolation was left but to die.

BÉRÉNICE: Ah, my lord, if that be so, then why part? I no longer speak of an illustrious marriage. Has Rome condemned me never to see you? Why should you begrudge me to breathe the same atmosphere with yourself?

TITUS: Alas! you command everything, madame. Remain; I do not resist. But I feel my weakness. I must, if you are here, be ever fighting against you and conquering you, and unceasingly watching my own footsteps, which will every hour be tempted by your allurements. What do I say? Even at this moment my heart forgets itself and remembers only that it loves you.

BÉRÉNICE: Well, my lord, and what can happen, after all? Do you perceive any inclination in the Romans to revolt?

TITUS: Who knows how they would regard such an encroachment on their laws? If they should mutiny, must my choice be vindicated by bloodshed, or if they remain quiescent and sell their laws, to what do you expose me? By what complaisance must I one day pay for their patience? What will they not proceed to demand? Can I sustain the laws which I have been unable to respect? When I accepted the empire, I swore to obey the laws.

BÉRÉNICE: No longer do I ask to stay. I esteem you capable of destroying my very life. I ask for no avenger of my wrongs except, ungrateful one, that which will be found at the bottom of your own heart.

ACT V

BÉRÉNICE: No. I will hear no more. I will depart. Why do you again present yourself to my sight? Why thus deepen my despair? Are you not satisfied? I will see no more. I depart forthwith.

TITUS: Stay! How unjust you are!

BÉRÉNICE: Ungrateful one! Stay! And why? To

hear the cruel joy of a malicious people, whose mockery would everywhere resound? To hear it, while I am drowned in my own tears? And what crime have I committed but that of loving you too well? Here I can look on nothing but what wounds my soul. This very apartment, prepared for me by your care, these places so long the witnesses of our love, on all sides bring up the past to my eyes. Come, Phénice!

TITUS: Bérénice, never did I love you so tenderly as now.

BÉRÉNICE: You love me—you declare it; and yet I am departing, and you command me to go? What! You find so many charms in my despair? Ah, cruel, display a little less love! Recall not for me too dear a sentiment. And let me at least depart persuaded that, already in secret exiled from your heart, I am quitting an ungrateful one who loses me without regret.

Bérénice hands Titus a letter which she has written, announcing that she is about to destroy herself. He reads it, and instantly declares that he will never permit such a design to be carried out, that for her sake he will renounce his imperial position and marry her. At this instant Antiochus enters and confesses to Titus that he has been his rival in love, but that he has been ever loyal, and now has resolved to deprive himself of life so that he may never be regarded as again becoming a possible suitor for the hand of Bérénice. Bérénice, touched to the heart, addresses both her lovers in noble terms. She will live. She will depart, never to see either of them again. But they are both to live likewise, and to pursue the pathway of duty and of honour.

ROMANCE OF THE ROSE

Lorris and De Meun

I.—Of the Rose and Love's Cruel Arrows

'Twas in the Maytime of delight—
So dreamt I—that I rose aright
From off my bed, flung on my gown,
And went my way without the town.
I dreamt I scarce had wandered far
Where streams and meads and blossoms are,
When, straight, a garden wall I spied
On which were pictures, rich and pied.
Thereon was drawn the form of Hate
With frowning face, and desolate;
And Villainy, the fearful-eyed,
Her sister, Felony, beside.

"The Romance of the Rose," the most extraordinary poetic production of the age of St. Louis—the thirteenth century—is in reality two poems written at different periods by two authors differing very largely in character and outlook. One-fifth of the poem as we have it was written by Guillaume de Lorris, who was born at Lorris, near Orleans, about 1200, and died probably before 1230. During the five years preceding his death the first part of the "Romance" was composed. It is an allegorised tale of love, his own or imagined, in which the lover's hopes—the plucking of the rose—remain unsatisfied. Forty years later the tale was continued by Jean de Meun, born at Meun, on the Loire, about 1240, an ardent speculator in the questions of the day. His is a style less exquisite than that of De Lorris, but rich in satire, and in the course of his 16,000 lines he succeeds in holding up the mirror to his age, almost forgetting the lover and the rose in his zeal. He died in 1305. A translation of the poems, which was made in the fourteenth century, has been attributed to Chaucer. This epitome has been prepared from the French text.

And Covetise, with fingers crooked;
And Avarice, who sallow looked;
And cheerless Envy—Sorrow, worn;
And wrinkled Age, with form forlorn.
There stood Hypocrisy, in guise
Of one who went with prayerful eyes;
And Poverty was also there
In foulest rags, her body bare.

Before these forms I pensive stood;
And also saw that garden good
Reach tree-tops high above that wall,
In which were birds a-singing all.
I longed to enter that sweet place.
Toward a gateway did I pace,
A little gate; thereon I smote.
Came one and oped, whom I would note.

A dame was she of beauty rare;
With tender flesh and flaming hair,
Bright eyes, and breath as sweet as thyme:
No goodlier known in any clime.
A chaplet on her brow was set.
She never grief nor labour met,
I ween; but all, from morn to night,
To deck herself was her delight.

She let me in. With gracious phrase,
"My name is Idleness," she says.
"In glee I live. My friend is Mirth,
The master of this plot of earth.
He built the walls; those paintings grim
Were painted there to pleasure him.
And here within he tarries oft,
With song of birds and solace soft."

She spoke; and I, with ravished eyes,
Went onward through the paradise

To find Sir Mirth, and see his face.
Now will I tell you what took place.
I came where maidens, dancing, sung;
And one named Gladness them among;
Where one named Courtesy came near
And bade me welcome without fear.
I glanced around. Sir Mirth I spied,
Whose beauty with Apollo vied.
With noble limbs; in samite clad;
A crown of roses eke he had.
With Gladness he was mated well
In whatsoe'er of bliss befel.

Hard by them stood the god of Love,
Whose yoke is man's bent neck above.
He wore a garment gaily made
Of every floweret in the glade.
And stood another near him who
Was Sweet-Looks, bearing weapons true,
Two bows—one gracious and one grim;
With arrows ten he burdened him—
Five evil, and five kindly. So
Back to the god of Love I go,
And her whom he did choose of all,
Whom they the Lady Beauty call.

As doth the moon make tapers pale
Of starlight, so by her did fail
The loveliness of others, though
Richesse was one you well would know,
So rich her gems, so proud her mien.
And Largess, too, by her was seen,
Whose hand was ope for all alike.
And did my sight another strike,
Named Franchise, and her tender heart
In bliss or sorrow took a part.
Of Courtesy, that worthy dame,
Cause have I had before to name

Her greeting; but of Youth I now
Will tell you. Twelve brief years, I vow,
Were hers: in innocence and joy
She loved a comely loving boy.
They kissed and cooed as turtles do;
And arms around each other threw.

Now happed it that I went my way
About that garden, glad and gay,
By alleys green, and blossomed fruit,
And spicy shade, and what to boot;
Of noble trees, or light or dark,
Wandering awhile; but failed to mark
How that the god of Love had snatched
Those arrows five, in make unmatched,
From Sweet-Looks—arrows that were kind;
And came he me with stealth behind.

I wandered on, unwitting quite,
Through all that Garden of Delight,
Until I came to where was seen
A fountain, girt with verdure green,
As fair as that wherein did gaze
Narcissus in the olden days.

Ah, me! therein I, mirrored, saw
A Rosebush. O could any law
Withhold me, then, ere I should seize
That loveliest Blossom borne to please?

Dread held me only; for I found
A hedge of thorns that Rose around.
Yet would I take. And slowly, so
I reached my hand; when, to my woe,
The god of Love sent forth his shaft.
My heart was hurt with cruel craft.

I fell. But, oh! that Rose the more
I longed for! Though were arrows four
Shot at me, each one made me yearn,
And with desire yet deeper burn.

All wounded, crawled I nearer yet,
Glad that small comforting to get
Of nearness. Then the god afresh
Drove arrows in my suffering flesh.
And then he cried, "Surrender, thou
That art my kneeling liegeman now!"

I yielded, and my wounds he healed;
And then with Counsel healing sealed,
And taught me all the way of Love,
And what sin should it be above;
And in what manner might its joy
Be conquered without one alloy.

"'Fore all, of Villainy beware,
To whom I hatred ever bare,"
Said he; "and keep guard of thy tongue
Lest it do trip foul speech among.
And courteous unto women all
Be thou in street, be thou in hall.
Also salute all men that thee
Salute with sweet civility.
Have fear of Pride; for Pride is that
Which never yet good love begat.

"Yet let thy habit richly be
What fits with thine economy.
In goodly cloth and brave attire
Is fuel oft for lover's fire.
In shoes and gloves be spruce and true,
With satin sash; a chaplet new
Of roses blown at Pentecost
Is not on Love's discerning lost.

"And well remember that, above
All else, bright spirit serveth love,
Love that will be so oft forlorn,
By hope and fear, and sorrow torn.
What cheerful pastime comes thy way,
Such kindly solace ne'er gainsay.
And with fair dames will well advance
Thy suit betimes to break a lance.
For who with arms is strong and brave
For love shall he not have to crave.

"If thou canst sing a ditty kind
So do, with ever ready mind.
And if with viol or with flute
Thou triflest, that will serve thy suit.

"Take heed to be not miser named.
Of that be rightful lover shamed
Before all others, for to the man
Who cannot give, Love never can.
But as thou givest of thy gold
So give thy heart, and open-souled
To that one centre of thy mind,
Unlooking forward or behind.

"And when hast thou thus vowed thy soul
To thy devotion, one and whole,
Then should the suffering that shall spring
Therefrom, for thee be secret thing,
Screened from the vulgar gaze of those
Who would perceive thy worthy woes.
Such throes and fevers shouldst thou feel
As would from thee remembrance steal
Of thine own self: hand, foot, and eye
Shall thy poor will-power then defy.

" But thou, when parted from thy love,
Wilt cry thy grief to heaven above,
Yearning, as lover alway will,
For that he would be seeing still—
For her who doth his spirit fill!
Though when thou meetest her, perchance,
Thy troubled speech shall not advance
Thy suit, so foolish wilt thou show
To one whose beauty moves thee so.

" Such blundering 'haviour then shall fret
Thy soul that no sleep shalt thou get,
But toss thee night-long on thy bed,
A cloud of anguish o'er thy head.
Thou'lt cry for dawn to chase the night,
To find thee in no better plight,
To don thy garb and seek her door,
Though winds do whistle, torrents pour,
Perchance to gain her ear, or not,
As luck will have it. Thus thy lot
Shall be. Be not my words forgot!"

When thus had spoke the god of Love,
I raised my eyes to heaven above
And cried against his grievous tale.
But, " Sooth," said he, " he may not fail
To pay the price who would attain
To Love's delight with might and main.
Yet gladly will I give thee three
Fair helpers, who shall faithful be,
Sweet-Looks is one; Sweet-Speech and Thought
The other twain. By them be taught."
He spoke, and vanished. To despair
Was I not then deserted there!

II.—Of the Winning of the Rose in the Garden of Delight

Now, then, as there I, brooding, stood,
Came near me one with gesture good,
Of gracious face. "In me you see,"
Said he, "the son of Courtesy.
Fair-Welcome am I called. I come
To render you assistance, some
Whereby may you the odour sweet
Of that fair Rose-tree get and greet."
"Kind sir, with welcome will I take,"
Cried I, "your help." So did I make
My way with him that hedged above,
And would have plucked the Bud I love.

But lo! there lurked a Felon foul,
With other three to threat and scowl.
Danger, his name; another, Fear,
With Shame and Evil-Tongue anear.
Fair-Welcome led me to the Rose,
Unheeding those three grudging foes.
He plucked a leaf, and of the best;
And with it decked I well my breast;
And, sure, my soul, then did it glow
With love, above all things below.

"O friend," said I, "that Rose I need
Also, or else my heart must bleed!
Give that as well!" Alarmed was he
At prayer for what could never be.
"O brother, ask no thing so bold!"
He gently said; but he could scold
No more; for then did Danger roar,
And raised his club, and all was o'er!

"Begone," cried he, "intruders twain!
Nor render words, for they be vain.
Begone! thou fool, Fair-Welcome, go!
Nor hither bring that stranger so!
Begone, or bear this savage blow!"

Fair-Welcome fled. I scrambled back
Athwart that hedge. There was no lack
Of oaths to make me hasten till
I got beyond that villain's will.

But woe was mine. No soul can know
The full weight of a lover's woe,
Who has not suffered as did I.
Alack! 'twere worthier I should die!

Yet happed it, then, in that sad hour,
Dame Reason spied me from her tower;
And down she stepped. Not young, nor old;
Not big, nor slight was she. Of gold
A crown she wore. Her eyes were bright
As the stars of morn and night.
All angel-souled, she saw my grief,
And spake these words for my relief.

"Fair friend, give Idleness the blame,
Who oped that gate whereby you came
Into this garden, where you knew
Sir Mirth, and all his foolish crew.
But now forget the wanton wile
Of Love, that must to care beguile,
With nought of profit, knowledge none:
Its slender pleasure soon undone."

Much more than this she soothly said.
But, stubborn, I but shook my head.
I turned away; when hailed me two,
Franchise and Pity, servers true.

For me they spake with Danger word
Of plea so earnest it was heard;
And, with Fair-Welcome, once more they
Did lead me where that Rose-tree lay.

Now passed I from the pit of Hell
To Heaven so high! I mind me well
How nobler seemed that lovely Flower
Than e'er before: its perfumed power,
Its beauteous hue, seemed all too sweet
For one on this dull earth to greet!
"Fair-Welcome, friend, permit me now,"
I begged, "my head thereto to bow,
And kiss that Rose. O then that kiss
Would thrill my frame with perfect bliss!"

"Dear friend," said he, "ask no such thing,
Lest wrong to Chastity you bring!
With kiss was never heart content."
And to his wish I then had bent
Straightway, had one not come anigh,
In jewelled robe of dainty dye,
Queen Venus; and her gracious hand
Upheld aloft a burning brand.
Said she, "Fair-Welcome, wherefore treat
This youth so harshly? Wherefore cheat
Him of a kiss, whose own lips red
Breathe as from some soft-petalled bed;
Whose teeth are white as *fleur-de-lis,*
Which doth with kissing well agree?"

Then, thus adjured, Fair-Welcome gave
Allowance. O then what a wave
Of heavenly joy possessed my soul!
That kiss was mine! My heart was whole!
And gone was all my cloud of dole!

But now, alas! did that ensue
Which was to such sweet kissing due;
When Shame arose, my soul to scourge;
And Evil-Tongue, to hurt, and urge
Sour Jealousy to wake, and rise,
And greet Fair-Welcome in this wise.

"Now tell me, prithee, what you mean
To let a stranger here be seen?
I'll have you straight in prison set
Who know not whom to stay or let!
Stands Shame away? What succour, she,
To her poor sister, Chastity?
That man within this sacred place
Brings on you all a deep disgrace!"

Thus spake she. And though well I tried
To soothe a creature so green-eyed,
And cruel, she would but abuse
Us all, and argument refuse.
She worked on Shame and Fear, till they
Roused Danger once more to obey
Her evil 'hest. Again I found
Myself an outcast from that ground.
She sought for masons, far and wide,
To build around it, and to hide
With walls and towers from my sad sight
That scented dwelling of delight.
And in one tower did she immure
Fair-Welcome. She could not endure
One of so gracious face as he;
A grief to her he could but be.

And thus had I been sorrowing still
Had not Queen Venus, with the will
Which none may hinder, snatched the key
Of that high tower and set him free,

Fair-Welcome, and those others whom
Had Jealousy there put in gloom—
'Mongst many Beauty, whom before
I have had reason to adore.

To me she came: to me she gave
That Rose I did so dearly crave.
At last! At last! The prize was mine!
On bed of turf did I incline
With that fair Flower. Our red lips met,
Whilst rose-leaves were our coverlet
From May to June. Said Beauty then,
"Should savage Jealousy yet pen
Our pleasure in with wall and tower,
O'er perfect Love not ever power
Is hers to work. Too late I deem
Shall all her spite and passion seem!"
But here I woke me from my dream.

FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

Wilhelm Tell

Persons in the Drama

HERMANN GESSLER, *Governor of Schwytz and Uri*
WERNER STAUFFACHER
WALTER FÜRST — RÖSSELMANN, *the Priest*
WILHELM TELL — KUONI, *herdsman*
ARNOLD OF MELCHTHAL — RUODI, *fisherman*
CONRAD BAUMGARTEN — MEYER VON SARNEN
CONRAD HUNN — STRUTH VON WINKELRIED
ITEL REDING — FISHERMAN'S SON
HEDWIG, *wife of Tell, daughter of Fürst*
ARMGART
MECHTHILD
ELSBETH
WALTER *and* WILHELM, *Tell's sons*
FRIESSHARDT *and* LEUTHOLD, *soldiers*
RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, *Gessler's Master of the Horse*
JOHANNES PARRICIDA, *Duke of Suabia*
MASTER STONEMASON
TASKMASTER — A CRIER

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A rocky shore of the Lake of Lucerne opposite Schwytz.* KUONI *and* RUODI *watch the threatening thunderstorm, when* BAUMGARTEN *rushes in breathlessly.*

BAUMGARTEN: For God's sake, ferryman, your boat! Quick, quick!

The life of Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller has been described as a long struggle against pecuniary difficulties, yet through it all he remained true to himself and steadfast to his

My life's at stake—they're close upon my heels!
It is the viceroy's men are after me.
The imperial seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg.

KUONI: How! What! The Wolfshot? Is it he pursues you?

BAUMGARTEN: He'll ne'er hurt man again! I've settled him.

RUODI: Now, God forgive you, what is this you've done?

BAUMGARTEN: What every free man in my place had done.

Mine own good household right I have enforced
'Gainst him that would have wronged my wife—my honour.
Heavens, whilst we speak the time is flying fast!

KUONI: Quick, ferryman, and set the good man over.

RUODI: Impossible! A storm is close at hand,
Wait till it pass! You must.

BAUMGARTEN: Almighty Heaven,
Then I am lost!

KUONI: Look, who comes here? 'Tis Tell!

TELL (*entering with a crossbow*): What man is he that implores for aid?

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high and noble calling. The son of an army surgeon, he was born at Marbach, in Würtemberg, on November 10, 1759. He was intended for the law, but abandoned that for medicine. Early in life he gave evidence of a talent for poetry—a talent that was fostered by his mother, herself of a poetic temperament. His first play, "Die Räuber," produced in 1782 at Mannheim, excited the disapproval of the court, whereupon the young poet was forbidden either to write more plays or to leave Stuttgart, where he was at the ducal school. He fled, however, and for the next year lay concealed at various places of retreat. In 1783 he returned to Mannheim, and was appointed dramatic poet of the theatre. From that time until his death, on May 9, 1805, plays and poems flowed rapidly from his pen. As a lyric poet Schiller may not hold front rank, but as a dramatist he stands foremost of the Germans. "Wilhelm Tell," his last completed drama, was produced in March, 1804, and, notwithstanding some obvious faults of construction, is a noble and vivid picture of a truly popular struggle for freedom.

KUONI: He is from Alzellen, and to guard his honour
From touch of foulest shame, has slain the Wolfshot,
The imperial seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg.
The viceroy's troopers are upon his heels.
He begs the boatman here to take him over,
But he, in terror of the storm, refuses.

RUODI: Well, there is Tell can steer as well as I,
He'll be my judge if it be possible. [*Thunder and storm.*
Am I to plunge into the jaws of hell?
I should be mad to dare the desperate act.

TELL: The brave man thinks upon himself the last.
Put trust in God, and help him in his need!

RUODI: Safe in the port, 'tis easy to advise.
There is the boat, and there the lake! Try you!

TELL: In God's name, then, give me the boat! I will.
Console my wife if I should come to grief;
I could not choose but do as I have done.

[*He leaps into the boat and pushes off.* RUODI *and* KUONI *anxiously watch the storm-tossed boat, when a troop of horsemen arrive in pursuit.*

HORSEMAN: Curse on you, he's escaped! You helped him off,
And you shall pay for it! Fall on their herds!
Down with the cottage! burn it! beat it down!

[*They rush off.*

RUODI: Righteous Heaven! Oh, when will come
Deliverance to this doom-devoted land? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Near Altdorf. On an eminence a castle in progress of erection. The* TASKMASTER *is urging the workmen with a stick, and shakes an old man who sinks down exhausted. He then retires up the stage.*

MASON: I'll drown the mallet in the deepest lake,
That served my hand on this accursèd pile.

[*Enter* TELL *and* STAUFFACHER.

STAUFFACHER: Oh, that I had not lived to see this sight!

TELL: What hands have built, my friend, hands can destroy. [*Pointing to the mountains.*
That home of freedom God hath built for us.

[*People enter bearing a cap upon a pole, followed by a* CRIER *and a tumultuous crowd.*

CRIER: Ye men of Uri, ye do see this cap!
'Tis the lord governor's good will and pleasure
The cap shall have like honour as himself;
All do it reverence with bended knee
And head uncovered; thus the king will know
Who are his true and loyal subjects here.
His life and goods are forfeits to the crown
That shall refuse obedience to the order.
[*Loud laughter. Procession passes on.*

MASON: The cap of Austria! Mark that! A snare
To get us into Austria's power, by Heaven!

WORKMAN: No free-born man will stoop to such disgrace. [*They retire up.*

TELL: You see how matters stand. Farewell, my friend!

STAUFFACHER: My heart's so full, and has so much to tell you.

TELL: Endure in silence! We can do no more.

STAUFFACHER: And you desert the common cause so

TELL: I was not born to ponder and select, [sadly?
But when your course of action is resolved,
Then call on Tell; you shall not find him fail. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—WALTER FÜRST'S *house.* FÜRST *and* MELCHTHAL.

MELCHTHAL: What have I done so heinous that I must
Skulk here in hiding, like a murderer?
I only laid my staff across the fists
Of the pert varlet, when before my eyes,
By order of the governor, he tried

To drive away my handsome team of oxen.
FÜRST: Oh, we old men can scarce command ourselves.
What wonder, then, if youth breaks out of bounds!
MELCHTHAL: I'm only sorry for my father's sake.
Maybe they'll bear him hard, the poor old man!
FÜRST: Away, away! I hear a knock! Perhaps
A message from the viceroy! Get thee in!
[MELCHTHAL *retires.* *Enter* STAUFFACHER.
Welcome, thrice welcome, Werner, to my roof!
What brings you here? What seek you here in Uri?
STAUFFACHER: I come to bring you tidings of a thing
That has been done at Sarnen worse than all.
A thing to make the very heart run blood!
FÜRST: What is it?
STAUFFACHER: There dwells in Melchthal, then,
An upright man, named Henry of the Halden.
The Landenberg, to punish some offence
Committed by the old man's son, required
He should produce his son upon the spot;
And when th' old man protested, and with truth,
That he knew nothing of the fugitive,
The tyrant called his torturers and made
The wretches fling the old man to the ground,
And plunge the pointed steel into his eyes.
FÜRST: Merciful Heaven!
MELCHTHAL (*rushing out*): Into his eyes! His eyes?
STAUFFACHER: Who is this youth? His son! Oh, Heaven!
MELCHTHAL: Blind, did you say? Quite blind—and both his eyes?
STAUFFACHER: Ah, I must swell the measure of your grief,
Instead of soothing it. They've left him nought!
Blind and in rags he moves from door to door.
MELCHTHAL: Hence, craven-hearted prudence, hence! and all
My thoughts be vengeance, and the despot's blood!

STAUFFACHER (*to* FÜRST): The measure's full—and are we then to wait
Till some extremity—
MELCHTHAL: Peace! What extremity
Remains for us to dread? What, when our eyes
No longer in their sockets are secure?
Heaven! Are we helpless? Wherefore did we learn
To bend the crossbow—wield the battle-axe?
FÜRST: If the three cantons thought as we three do,
Something might then be done with good effect.
STAUFFACHER: When Uri calls, when Unterwald replies,
Schwytz will be mindful of her ancient league.
FÜRST: Hear my opinion. On the lake's left bank
A meadow lies, by shepherds called the Rootli;
'Tis where our canton bound'ries verge on yours.
Thither by lonely bypaths let us wend
At midnight, and deliberate o'er our plans.
Let each bring with him there ten trusty men,
All one at heart with us; and then we may
Consult together for the general weal,
And, with God's guidance, fix what next to do.
STAUFFACHER: So let it be. And now your true right hand!
So shall together we three cantons stand
In victory and defeat, in life and death.

ACT II

[*The midnight meeting on the Rootli.* MELCHTHAL, BAUMGARTEN, FÜRST, STAUFFACHER, *and their friends, thirty-three in all, eleven from each canton, are assembled in conclave round a fire.* TELL *is not among them.*

STAUFFACHER: And so I say,
Nature's primæval state returns again,
Where man stands hostile to his fellow-man;

And if all other means shall fail his need,
One last resource remains—his own good sword.
Our dearest treasures call to us for aid,
Against th' oppressor's violence; we stand
For country, home, for wives, for children here!

ALL (*clashing their swords*): Here stand we for our homes, our wives, our children.

REDING: Confederates! Have all gentler means been tried?
Perchance the emp'ror knows not of our wrongs.

HUNN: I was at Rheinfeld, at the emperor's court,
Deputed by the cantons to complain
Of the oppressions of these governors.
Expect no justice from the emperor!

REDING: What plan, then, is most likely to succeed?

FÜRST: To keep our ancient rights inviolate.
Not lawless innovation, is our aim.
Let Cæsar still retain what is his due.

MEYER: I hold my land of Austria in fief.

FÜRST: Continue, then, to pay your feudal dues.

RÖSSELMANN: Of Zurich's abbess I'm the humble vassal.

FÜRST: Give to the cloister what the cloister claims.

STAUFFACHER: The empire only is my feudal lord.

FÜRST: What needs must be, we'll do, but nothing more.
We'll drive these tyrants and their minions hence,
And raze their towering strongholds to the ground,
Yet shed, if possible, no drop of blood.

REDING: The enemy is armed as well as we,
And, rest assured, he will not yield in peace.

STAUFFACHER: We will surprise him, ere he is prepared.

MEYER: Rossberg and Sarnen both must be secured
Before a sword is drawn in either canton.

WINKELRIED: What if till Christmas we delay! At Sarnen

'Tis custom for the serfs to throng the castle,
Bringing the governor their annual gifts.
Thus may some ten or twelve selected men
Enter the castle and secure the gates.

MELCHTHAL: The Rossberg I will undertake to scale.
I have a sweetheart in the garrison,
Who'll lower me at night a hempen ladder.

REDING: Are all resolved in favour of delay?

STAUFFACHER (*counting the hands*): Twenty to twelve is the majority.

FÜRST: If on th' appointed day the castles fall,
From mountain on to mountain we shall speed
The fiery signal: in the capital
Of every canton quickly rouse the landsturm.
The tyrants, seeing our martial front, will take
Safe conduct forth beyond our boundaries.

STAUFFACHER: Not so with Gessler. He will make a stand,
Surrounded with his dread array of horse.

BAUMGARTEN: Place me where'er a life is to be lost;
I owe my life to Tell, and cheerfully
Will pledge it for my country. Look—the sun!

RÖSSELMANN: By this fair light which greeteth us before
Those other nations living far beneath,
A band of brothers true we swear to be,
Never to part in danger or in death!

[*They repeat his words.*

We swear we will be free, as were our sires,
And sooner die than live in slavery!

[*All repeat as before.*

We swear to put our trust in the Most High,
And not to quail before the might of man!

[*All repeat as before, and embrace each other.*

Act III

[*A meadow near Altdorf.* Friesshardt *and* Leuthold *on guard by the cap on a pole at the back of the stage. Enter* Mechthild *and* Elsbeth, *with their children.*

Mechthild: There hangs the viceroy! Your obeisance, children!

Elsbeth: I would to God he'd go, and leave his cap!

Friesshardt: Out of the way, confounded pack of gossips!
Who sent for you? Go, send your husbands here,
If they have courage to defy the order.

[*Enter* Tell *with a crossbow, leading his son* Walter *by the hand. They are about to pass on, when* Friesshardt *stops them, presenting his pike.*

Friesshardt: Stand, I command you, in the emperor's name!

Tell: What would ye? Wherefore do ye stop me thus?

Friesshardt: You've broke the mandate, and must go to prison.

Walter: Father to prison! Help! This way, you men!

[*Men pour in from all sides, among them* Fürst, Melchthal, *and* Stauffacher; *the peasants want to rescue* Tell, *and hustle* Friesshardt *and* Leuthold, *who shout for help. Enter* Gessler, *on horseback,* Rudolph der Harras, *and armed attendants.*

Harras: Room for the viceroy!

Gessler: Drive the clowns apart!
Who calls for help? Why do you hold this man?

Friesshardt: I'm stationed sentinel beside the cap;
This man I apprehended in the act
Of passing it without obeisance due.

Gessler: And do you, Tell, so lightly hold your king,
And me, who act as his vicegerent here,
That you refuse obeisance to the cap?

TELL: Pardon me, good my lord! The action sprung
From inadvertence—not from disrespect.
GESSLER (*after a pause*): I hear, Tell, you're a master with the bow—
Is that boy thine, Tell?
TELL: Yes, my gracious lord.
GESSLER: Then, Tell, let's see thy skill. Make ready, now,
To shoot an apple from the stripling's head!
See that thou hitt'st the apple at the first,
For, shouldst thou miss, thy head shall pay the forfeit.
TELL: What monstrous thing, my lord, is this you ask?
What, from the head of mine own child? No, no!
GESSLER: Or thou must shoot, or with thee dies the boy!
FÜRST: My lord, we bow to your authority;
But, oh, let justice yield to mercy here!
WALTER: Grandfather, do not kneel to that bad man!
Say, where am I to stand? I do not fear.
GESSLER: Bind him to yonder lime-tree!
WALTER: What! Bind me?
No, I will not be bound! I will be still!
Quick, father, show them what thy bow can do.
[*He goes to the tree, and an apple is placed on his head.*
GESSLER: Now to thy task! Men bear not arms for nought.
It pleases you to carry bow and bolt;
Well, be it so. I will prescribe the mark.
TELL: Release me from this shot! Here is my heart!
[*Bares his breast.*
GESSLER: 'Tis not thy life I want. I want the shot.
No storm affrights thee, when a life's at stake.
Now, saviour, help thyself—thou savest all!
WALTER: Shoot, father, shoot! Fear not!
TELL: It must be!
[*He gets his bow ready, sticks another arrow in his belt, takes aim, and shoots.*
STAUFFACHER: The boy's alive!

MANY VOICES: The apple has been struck!

WALTER (*runs in with the apple*): Here is the apple, father! Well I knew
You would not harm your boy.

[TELL *embraces him, and sinks down exhausted.*

GESSLER: By Heaven, the apple's cleft right through the core!
It was a master shot, I must allow.
But, Tell, why did you place—I saw it well—
A second arrow in thy belt? Nay, speak!
Frankly and cheerfully confess the truth.
Whate'er it be, I promise thee thy life.

TELL: Since you have promised not to take my life,
I will, without reserve, declare the truth.
If that my hand had struck my darling child,
This second arrow I had aimed at you,
And, be assured, I should not then have missed.

GESSLER: Well, Tell, I promised thou shouldst have thy life.
Yet, as I know the malice of thy thoughts,
I'll have thee carried hence, and safely penned
Where neither sun nor moon shall reach thine eyes.
Seize on him, guards! Remove him to my ship!
At Küssnacht I will see him safely lodged. [*Exit.*

FÜRST: All's over now! He is resolved to bring
Destruction on myself and all my house.

COUNTRY PEOPLE (*surrounding* TELL): Our last remaining comfort goes with you!

LEUTHOLD: I'm sorry for you, Tell, but must obey.

TELL: Farewell!

WALTER: Oh, father, father, father dear!

TELL: Thy Father is on high—appeal to Him!

STAUFFACHER: Have you no message, Tell, to send your wife?

TELL (*clasping the boy to his breast*): The boy's uninjured. God will succour me!

[*Tears himself away, and follows the soldiers.*

Act IV

Scene I.—*Stormy day on Lake of Lucerne. Fisherman and boy have been watching* Gessler's *ship tossed by the storm, until it has disappeared behind a cliff. After a while, enter* Tell *with his crossbow. He looks round wildly, then throws himself on his knees and stretches out his hands towards heaven.*

Boy: See, father, a man on's knees. Who can it be?
Fisherman: Who is it? God in heaven! What, Wilhelm Tell!
How came you hither? Speak!
Tell: From yonder vessel.
Boy: Where is the viceroy?
Tell: Drifting on the waves.
I lay on deck, fast bound with cords, disarmed,
In utter hopelessness. Then we put forth,
The viceroy, Harras, and their suite. My bow
And quiver lay astern beside the helm.
A storm swept down upon us with such force
That every oarsman's heart within him sank.
Then heard I one of the attendant train,
Turning to Gessler, in this wise accost him:
"You see our danger, and your own, my lord?
Now, here is Tell, a stout and fearless man;
How if we should avail ourselves of him
In this emergency?" The viceroy then
Addressed me thus: "If thou wilt undertake
To bring us through this tempest safely, Tell,
I might consent to free thee from thy bonds."
They loosed the cords, and made me take my place
Beside the helm. I steered as best I could,
But kept a watchful eye upon the shore.
And when I had descried a shelving crag
I brought the vessel's stern close to the rock;
Then snatching up my weapons, with a bound

I swung myself upon the flattened shelf,
And with my feet thrust off, with all my might,
The puny bark into the watery hell.
There let it drift about, as Heaven ordain!

FISHERMAN: But you will be in peril, should perchance
The viceroy 'scape this tempest with his life.

TELL: I heard him say, as I lay bound on board,
At Brunnen he proposed to disembark,
And, crossing Schwytz, convey me to his castle.
Which is the nearest way to Arth and Küssnacht?

FISHERMAN: My boy can show you the nearest road.

TELL: Then do me this one favour—speed to Bürglen.
My wife is anxious at my absence. Tell her
That I am free, and in secure concealment. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A pass near Küssnacht, with rocks on either side.*

TELL (*enters with his crossbow*): Through this ravine
he needs must come. There is
No other way to Küssnacht. Here I'll do it.
From yonder point my shaft is sure to hit.
The straitness of the gorge forbids pursuit.
Now, Gessler, balance thine account with Heaven!
My boys, poor innocents, my loyal wife,
Must be protected, tyrant, from thy rage!

[*Enter* ARMGART *with several children.*

ARMGART: Here he cannot escape me. He *must* hear
me.

FRIESSHART (*coming hastily down the pass*): Make
way, make way! My lord, the governor,
Is close behind me, riding down the pass.

[*Exit* TELL. GESSLER *and* HARRAS *appear on horseback at the upper end of the pass.*

GESSLER: Great projects are at work and hatching now.
Th' imperial house seeks to extend its power.
This petty nation is a stumbling block—
One way or other it must be put down.

ARMGART: Mercy, lord governor! Oh, pardon, pardon!

GESSLER: Why do you cross me on the public road? Stand back, I say.

ARMGART: My husband lies in prison.
My wretched orphans cry for bread. Have pity!
Pity, my lord, upon our sore distress!
Justice, my lord! Ay, as thou hop'st for justice
From Him who rules above, show it to us!

GESSLER: Give way, or else my horse shall ride you down.

[ARMGART *throws her children and herself upon the ground before him.*

GESSLER: Drag her away, lest I forget myself,
And do some deed I may repent me of.

HARRAS: My lord, the servants cannot force their way; The pass is blocked up by a bridal train.

GESSLER: This braggart spirit of freedom I will crush;
I will proclaim a new law through the land;
I will——

[*An arrow pierces him and he falls to the ground.*

Oh, God! I die! That shot was Tell's.

TELL (*on the rocks above*): Thou knowest the marksman—I, and I alone.
Now are our homesteads free, and innocence
From thee is safe; thou'lt be our curse no more.

[*He disappears.*

ARMGART (*holds up a child*): Look, children, how a tyrant dies!

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A common near Altdorf. The keep of Uri in the background, with the scaffolding still standing, as in first act.* RUODI, KUONI, MASON, *and country folk.*

RUODI: See there! The beacons on the mountain heights!

KUONI: The enemy's routed.
MASON: And the forts are stormed.
RUODI: And we of Uri, do we still endure
Upon our native soil the tyrant's keep?
ALL: Down with it!
[*They fall upon the building on every side. Enter* FÜRST, MELCHTHAL, and BAUMGARTEN.
MELCHTHAL: What! Stands the fortress still, when Sarnen lies
In ashes, and the Rossberg's in our hands?
[*Children cross the stage with fragments of wood.*
CHILDREN: We're free! We're free!
FÜRST: Oh, what a joyous scene!
STAUFFACHER (*entering quickly*): The emperor is murdered!
FÜRST: Gracious heaven!
STAUFFACHER: The doer makes the deed more dreadful still;
It was his nephew, his own brother's son,
Duke John of Austria, who struck the blow.
But where is Tell? Shall he, our freedom's founder,
Alone be absent from our festival?
Come, to his dwelling let us all repair,
And bid the saviour of our country hail! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. — *Interior of* TELL'S *cottage.* HEDWIG, WALTER, *and* WILHELM.

HEDWIG: My own dear boys! Your father comes to-day;
The country owes its liberty to him!
WALTER: And I, too, mother, bore my part in it.
[*She embraces him. A monk appears at the door.*
WILHELM: See, mother, yonder stands a holy friar.
HEDWIG: Go lead him in.
WILHELM: Come in, good man. Mother will give you food.

MONK (*uneasily*): Where am I? In what country? Tell me.

WALTER: How?
Are you bewildered that you know not where?
You are at Bürglen, in the land of Uri.

MONK (*to* HEDWIG): Are you alone? Your husband, is he here?

HEDWIG: I am expecting him. But what ails you, man?
There's something in your looks that omens ill!
Touch not my garments, come not near me, monk!

WALTER (*springing up*): Mother, here's father!

HEDWIG (*trembling*): Oh, my God!

WILHELM (*running after his brother*): My father!

[TELL *and the children enter together.* HEDWIG *falls on his neck.*

HEDWIG: Oh, Tell, what anguish have I borne for thee!

[*Monk becomes attentive.*

TELL: Forget it now, and live for joy alone!

HEDWIG: Oh, Tell, Tell! (*Steps back, dropping his hand.*) How dost thou return to me?
This hand—dare I take hold of it? This hand——

TELL (*firmly*): Has shielded you and set my country free.
Freely I raise it in the face of Heaven!—
Who is this friar here?

HEDWIG: Ah, I forgot him;
Speak thou with him; I shudder at his presence.

TELL (*examining him closely*): You are no monk. Who are you?

MONK: You have slain
The governor who did you wrong. I, too,
Have slain a foe who robbed me of my rights.
He was no less your enemy than mine.

TELL (*drawing back*): You are—oh, horror! Go, go, my dear wife!
In, children, in! Unhappy man, you are——

HEDWIG: Alas! what is it? Come!

[*Exit with the children.*

TELL: You are the Duke
Of Austria—I know it. You have slain
The emperor, your uncle and liege lord;
Slain him—your king, your uncle! And the earth
Still bears you! And the sun still shines on you!

JOHANNES: I hoped to find compassion at your hands.
You took, like me, revenge upon your foe!

TELL: Unhappy man! Dare you confound the crime
Of blood-imbued ambition with the act
Forced on a father in mere self-defence?
I have no part with you. You murdered, I
Have shielded all that was most dear to me.
Hence, on the dread career you have begun!
Cease to pollute the home of innocence!

[JOHANNES *turns to depart.*

And yet my soul bleeds for you. Gracious Heaven,
So young, of such a noble line—an outcast!

[*Covers his face.*

JOHANNES: If you have pity or a human heart——

[*Falls down before him.*

TELL: Stand up, stand up, I say!

JOHANNES: Not till you give
Your hand in promise of assistance to me.

TELL: Can I assist you? Can a sinful man?
Yet get you up—how black soe'er your crime—
You are a man. I, too, am one. From Tell
Shall no one part uncomforted. I will
Do all that lies within my power. Hear, then!
You must to Italy—to Saint Peter's city—
There cast yourself at the pope's feet—confess
Your guilt to him, and ease your laden soul!

JOHANNES: Will he not to th' avengers yield me up?

TELL: Whate'er he does, accept it as from God.

[*Alp horns and many voices are heard in the distance.*

But I hear voices! Hence!

HEDWIG (*hurrying in*): Where art thou, Tell?
My father comes, and in exulting bands
All the confederates approach.
JOHANNES (*covering himself*): Woe's me!
I dare not tarry 'mong these happy men!
TELL: Go, dearest wife, and give this man to eat;
And when he quits you turn your eyes away,
So that you do not see which way he goes.
[*Exeunt* JOHANNES *and* HEDWIG. *The whole stage fills rapidly with peasants led by* STAUFFACHER.
ALL: Long live brave Tell, our shield, our saviour!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Marmion

Canto I

In the reign of King Henry VIII, Lord Marmion of Fontenaye and Lutterward, an English knight of noble blood and of great prowess and possessions, carried off from her convent Constance de Beverley, a professed Benedictine nun of good family, and afterwards kept her about his person in the character and disguise of a page. But at the end of three years he fell in love with a beautiful heiress, Clara de Clare, who had given her heart to Ralph de Wilton, a valiant young knight living near her. Refused by Clara, Marmion set to work to rid himself of his rival; and, having persuaded Constance to put a packet of forged letters importing treasonable practices into a collection of documents preserved by de Wilton, accused him of these crimes before the king, alleging that he was in league with Marten Swart, who had come over to England to assist the cause of the pretender, Lambert Simnel.

Put on his trial, de Wilton freely admitted that he had known Swart in Guelders, and had corresponded with him, and, to prove the innocent nature of this correspondence, he sent to his castle for it. Greatly to his surprise and horror, it was found

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"Marmion, a Tale of Flodden Field," is something more than a romantic story; it is an accurate and solid picture of a historical period. It was begun in November, 1806, and, according to Scott himself, was composed as a relief to "graver cares." Its popularity was amazing, exceeding even that of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." "'Marmion,'" says one biographer, "took possession of the public like a kind of madness; the verses not only clung to the memory, but they would not keep off the tongue; people could not help shouting them in solitary places and muttering them as they walked about the streets." In common with most of his works, Scott bestowed extraordinary care upon the composition of the poem. Some of it, especially the battle, was actually composed while he was galloping on his charger over Portobello sands during his volunteer exercises. "Marmion" was published in February, 1808, Scott (see Vol. VII, p. 241) accepting the sum of one thousand guineas for his rights. The numbering of the cantos in this and in the following poem are not the same as in the originals.

to contain the incriminating letters which Constance had forged and foisted into it. In these circumstances, it was settled that the guilt or innocence of de Wilton should be referred to the judgment of God, and decided by single combat between the two parties at Cottiswold. In this contest the treacherous Marmion was successful, and the innocent de Wilton was supposed to die of his wounds. Clara, in the meantime, full of grief for her lover's fate and of horror at Marmion's continued overtures, took refuge in the Benedictine Abbey of St. Hilda at Whitby, with the ultimate intention of taking the veil. But she failed to reckon with the jealousy of Constance, who, having assisted the perfidious scheme for promoting Marmion's marriage with her rival merely for the sake of possessing herself of a secret which gave her power over his life, now resolved, with the assistance of a wicked monk, to destroy Clara by poison.

The plot, however, was detected, and Marmion, tired of her love and wearied by her jealousy, but having no suspicion of the fate in store for her, was only too ready to hand back his lady love to her spiritual superiors. Accordingly, she and her companion in guilt were taken to the monastery on Holy Isle, where they were arraigned before the three heads of the Benedictine Order, the blind Abbot of St. Cuthbert's, the Prioress of Tynemouth, and the Abbess of St. Hilda, who had Clara, the novice, in her company.

Before them stood a guilty pair;
But, though an equal fate they share,
Yet one alone deserves our care.
Her sex a page's dress belied;
The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,
Obscured her charms, but could not hide.
  Her cap down o'er her face she drew,
    And, on her doublet breast,
  She tried to hide the badge of blue,
    Lord Marmion's falcon crest.
But, at the prioress' command,
A monk undid the silken band
  That tied her tresses fair,
And raised the bonnet from her head,
And down her slender form they spread
  In ringlets rich and rare.
Constance de Beverley they know,
Sister professed of Fontevraud,

Whom the Church numbered with the dead,
For broken vows, and convent fled.
When thus her face was given to view,
(Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear
To those bright ringlets glistening fair),
Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy;
And there she stood so calm and pale,
That, but her breathing did not fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
You might have thought a form of wax
Wrought to the very life was there:
So still she was, so pale, so fair.
Her comrade was a sordid soul,
  Such as does murder for a meed;
Who, but for fear, knows no control,
Because his conscience seared and foul
  Feels not the import of his deed;
One whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.
Such tools the Tempter ever needs,
To do the savagest of deeds;
For them no visioned terrors daunt,
Their nights no fancied spectres haunt;
One fear with them, of all most base,
The fear of death, alone finds place.
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
His body on the floor to dash,
And crouch, like hound beneath the lash;
While his mute partner, standing near,
Waited her doom without a tear.
Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
Well might her paleness terror speak!

For there were seen in that dark wall
Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall,—
Who enters at such grisly door
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
In each a slender meal was laid,
Of roots, of water, and of bread:
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motionless;
Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Showed the grim entrance of the porch:
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark red walls and arches gleam;
Hewn stones and cement were displayed,
And building tools in order laid.
And now that blind old abbot rose,
To speak the Chapter's doom
On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb;
But stopped, because that woeful maid,
Gathering her powers, to speak essayed;
Twice she essayed, and twice in vain;
Her accents might no utterance gain;
Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
From her convulsed and quivering lip;
'Twixt each attempt all was so still,
You seemed to hear a distant rill—
'Twas ocean's swells and falls;
For though this vault of sin and fear
Was to the sounding surge so near,
A tempest there you scarce could hear,
So massive were the walls.
At length an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her heart,
And light came to her eye,
And colour dawned upon her cheek,
A hectic and a fluttered streak,
Like that left on the Cheviot peak

By autumn's stormy sky;
And when her silence broke at length,
Still as she spoke she gathered strength,
And armed herself to bear.
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy
In form so soft and fair.

Constance revealed the whole baseness of her lover in making false charges against de Wilton, and in abandoning herself. Finally, after denouncing the bigotry and cruelty of her judges, and foretelling the speedy destruction of their power, she was led to her doom, expressing no remorse for her own plot against Clara, but leaving behind her documents which established the perfidy of Marmion.

Canto II

Meantime, Marmion proceeded on an embassy from King Henry to the court of James IV of Scotland to inquire why that sovereign was raising so vast an army in the neighbourhood of his capital. At Norham upon the Tweed, the last English post upon his road, the valiant but treacherous knight asked his host, Sir Hugh the Heron, to furnish him with a guide to the Scottish court; and after some deliberation a holy palmer was introduced for this purpose, who guided Marmion in silence across the border to the village of Gifford in East Lothian, where the company took up its quarters at a country inn. Here the Palmer's thin, dark visage and stern encountering glance disturbed the soul of Marmion, and reduced the whole band to silence. To relieve this the knight called on one of his squires for a song, but was only plunged into deeper gloom when the youth selected a favourite air of Constance's, and sang of the shameful death that is decreed to those who are faithless in love.

High minds of native pride and force
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have,
Thou art the torturer of the brave!
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel
Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,
Even while they writhe beneath the smart
Of civil conflict in the heart.

For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace said—
"Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,
Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,
Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul?
Say, what may this portend?"
Then first the Palmer's silence broke
(The livelong day he had not spoke):
"The death of a dear friend."
Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
Ne'er changed in worst extremity;
Marmion, whose soul could scantly brook
Even from his king a haughty look;
Whose accent of command controlled,
In camps, the boldest of the bold—
Thought, look, and utterance failed him now,
Fall'n was his glance, and flushed his brow;
For either in the tone,
Or something in the Palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook,
That answer he found none.
Thus oft it haps, that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;
A fool's wise speech confounds the wise,
And proudest princes vail their eyes
Before their meanest slave.
Well might he falter! By his aid
Was Constance Beverley betrayed.
Not that he augured of the doom
Which on the living closed the tomb:
His conscience slept—he deemed her well,
And safe secured in distant cell;
But, wakened by her favourite lay,
And that strange Palmer's boding say,
That fell so ominous and drear

Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venomed throes,
Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose;
And Constance, late betrayed and scorned,
All lovely on his soul returned;
Lovely as when, at treacherous call,
She left her convent's peaceful wall,
Crimsoned with shame, with terror mute,
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

The host then told a story of a midnight encounter that had taken place in the neighbourhood between King Alexander III and a spirit in the shape of Edward I of England, in which the Scottish sovereign overcame his ghostly opponent, and compelled him to disclose the fortune that awaited him in his war with the Danes. He concluded by saying that a similar adventure awaited any knight who would venture at midnight to the same spot. The tale so haunted the thoughts of Marmion that he could not rest till he had tested its truth. Foiled in his encounter with the elfin foe, he returned to the inn. The next day he resumed his march, still in gloomy mood, and, ere long, met Sir David Lindesay, the Lion King-at-Arms of Scotland, who, having been sent to attend him, conducted him to a castle a few miles from Edinburgh, where he was to remain for a day or two till the King was at liberty to receive him. Here Lindesay told an uncanny story of a vision which had recently appeared to his sovereign at Linlithgow, warning him to abandon his warlike preparations; and, in return, Marmion related how at Gifford he had met in combat and been defeated by an apparition which bore the features of a mortal enemy whom he had believed to be dead these many years. On the evening of the following day Lindesay and Marmion went to Edinburgh, and attended a state banquet given by the King at Holy-Rood to his chief nobles.

This feast outshone his banquets past;
It was his blithest—and his last.
The dazzling lamps, from gallery gay,
Cast on the court a dancing ray;
Here to the harp did minstrels sing;
There ladies touched a softer string;
With long-eared cap and motley vest,
The licensed fool retailed his jest;

His magic tricks the juggler plied;
At dice and draughts the gallants vied;
While some, in close recess apart,
Courted the ladies of their heart.
Nor courted them in vain;
For often in the parting hour
Victorious love asserts his power
O'er coldness and disdain;
And flinty is her heart can view
To battle march a lover true—
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
Nor own her share of pain.
Through this mixed crowd of glee and game,
The King to greet Lord Marmion came,
While, reverent, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know.
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doffed to Marmion bending low
His broidered cap and plume.
For royal were his garb and mien,
His cloak, of crimson velvet piled,
Trimmed with the fur of marten wild,
His vest of changeful satin sheen,
The dazzled eye beguiled;
His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,
The thistle brave, of old renown;
His trusty blade, Toledo right,
Descended from a baldric bright;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was buttoned with a ruby rare:
And Marmion deemed he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.
The monarch's form was middle size;

For feat of strength, or exercise,
  Shaped in proportion fair;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye
  His short curled beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
  And firm his stirrup in the lists;
And, oh! he had that merry glance
  That seldom lady's heart resists.
Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
And loved to plead, lament, and sue—
Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain,
For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.

Marmion was then told that the English aggressions on the border had been so deliberate and serious as to leave little hope of peace being maintained, but he was bidden to accept the hospitality of Lord Angus at Tantallon Castle till the return of the herald who had been sent into England to demand satisfaction for these injuries. Meantime, the Abbess of Whitby, returning by sea with Clara, from the condemnation of Constance, was captured and brought to Edinburgh. To her horror, she and her train were placed by the Scottish monarch under the charge of Marmion, and directed to remain with him at Tantallon, and finally to be conducted by him to England, where Clara would be handed over to her kinsman, Lord Fitz Clare. But having been allowed to accept an invitation to stop at a convent of Cistercian nuns near North Berwick, the holy mother became separated from Clara and the Palmer, but not before she had placed in the hands of the latter the documents establishing the innocence of de Wilton and the treachery of Marmion which she had received from Constance at her trial.

Canto III

One night, when she was pacing the battlements of Tantallon Castle, absorbed in thoughts of religion and of de Wilton, Clara found some armour lying in her path, and was wondering what it was doing there when suddenly de Wilton himself confronted her. He told her how, after recovering from the wounds received in the combat with Marmion, he had left England and had travelled as a palmer in many foreign lands; how, still in this guise, he had come to Norham and guided his mortal enemy to Scotland; how at Gifford Moor he had had a midnight encounter with Marmion and beaten him to the earth; how the Abbess of Whitby had given him documents which cleared his

name and incriminated Marmion; how he had told his tale to Douglas, Lord Angus, and was to be re-knighted by him on the morrow, and how he meant immediately afterwards to repair to Surrey's camp to aid his country's cause in the great battle which was then impending. Needless to tell the joy of Clara, who assisted him in girding on his knightly armour and watched him ride forth at break of day.

Meantime, Marmion, impatient for the battle, left the Castle a little later on the same errand, accompanied by Clara, but not before he had quarrelled with his host, who refused to take his hand at parting. It was not long before he missed the Palmer from his company, and on making enquiries learned how that holy man, arrayed in armour, mounted on one of Lord Angus's steeds, and looking very like de Wilton, had left Tantallon earlier in the day.

The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke;
"Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!"
He muttered: "'Twas not fay nor ghost
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.
O dotage blind and gross!
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid de Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross.
How stand we now? He told his tale
To Douglas; and with some avail;
'Twas therefore gloomed his rugged brow—
Will Surrey dare to entertain
'Gainst Marmion charge disproved and vain?
Small risk of that, I trow,
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun,
Must separate Constance from the nun—
Oh! what a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive!
A Palmer, too!—no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye:
I might have known there was but one
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

Stung with these thoughts, Marmion urged on his troops, and by evening reached the Tweed. In the morning, however, the

sight of the two armies encamped near Flodden drove away his gloom, and leaving Clara on an eminence in the rear in charge of two of his squires, he straightway galloped to Lord Surrey, who joyfully greeted him and assigned him a position in the vanguard lines. Meantime, as the battle progressed and the fortune of the day seemed going against England, first one squire, Blount, and then the other, Eustace, deserted Clara and plunged into the fight. But she was not left long alone before Marmion was brought back by Blount and Eustace, mortally wounded.

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
Redeem my pennon—charge again!
Cry, 'Marmion to the rescue!' Vain—
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!
Yet my last thought is England's: fly—
To Dacre bear my signet-ring:
Tell him his squadrons up to bring.
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie.
Tunstall lies dead upon the field—
His life-blood stains the spotless shield;
Edmund is down; my life is reft;
The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost.
Must I bid twice? Hence, varlets! Fly!
Leave Marmion here alone—to die."
They parted, and alone he lay;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmured: "Is there none
Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst?"

O Woman! in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When, with the baron's casque, the maid
To the nigh streamlet ran:
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears;
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stooped her by the runnel's side,
But in abhorrence backward drew;
For, oozing from the mountain's side,
Where raged the war, a dark red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn? Behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above some half-worn letters say,
Drink, weary pilgrim, drink and pray,
For the kind soul of Sibyl Grey,
Who built this cross and well.
She filled the helm, and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A monk supporting Marmion's head:
A pious man whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrive the dying, bless the dead.

When Marmion had drunk deep of the water, and Clara was bathing his brow, he asked whether it was the hand of Clara or of injured Constance that was doing him the service. Clara was obliged to tell him of Constance's death, and the news roused Marmion from the ground in a transport of fury and threatened vengeance, only to send him back into a fresh faint.

With fruitless labour, Clara bound
And strove to staunch the gushing wound:
The monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the Church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear.

It was the voice of Constance that he heard, singing her favourite air. In truth, Marmion was very near his end.

The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,
And "Stanley!" was the cry.
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye:
With dying hand, above his head
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"
Were the last words of Marmion.

Of the distinction won by de Wilton in this battle of Flodden Field, of his restoration to all his former honours and possessions, and of his happy union with his faithful and long-loved Clara, the reader will scarcely need to be told. "Love they like Wilton and like Clare" was for long a proverbial blessing invoked on a wedded couple.

Lady of the Lake

Canto I

A HUNTSMAN, taking part in a stag-hunt in the Highlands of Perthshire, pursued the chase with such ardour and impetuosity that his horse, overcome with fatigue, stumbled and died in a rocky valley. After wandering further through the ravine the huntsman climbed up a precipitous rock.

> And thus an airy point he won,
> Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
> One burnished sheet of living gold,
> Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled
> In all her length far-winding lay,
> With promontory, creek, and bay,
> And islands that, empurpled bright,
> Floated amid the livelier light,
> And mountains that like giants stand
> To sentinel enchanted land.

After gazing with rapture on the scene the huntsman sounded his horn in the hope of calling some attendant or straggler of the train, when, to his surprise, he saw a little skiff, guided by a beautiful damsel, touch the shore beneath him.

The "Lady of the Lake" is Scott's third poem. It was published in May, 1810, Scott receiving nominally £2,000 for the copyright, the publishers, however, retaining three-fourths of the property. Its success equalled that of its predecessors; according to Lockhart, no fewer than 20,000 copies were sold before the year was out. Critics who had vigorously condemned the "Lay" and "Marmion" now joined in the chorus of applause. The Perthshire Highlands became the fashionable resort for tourists, and, again quoting Lockhart, the post-horse duty to Scotland regularly rose from that year. The success that attended Scott's poems was due not so much to their purely poetic qualities—although they include many touches of genuine poetry—as to the romantic spirit which he afterwards used to such excellent purpose in his novels. Scott, who greatly admired Johnson's poems, never formed an exalted opinion of his own verses.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace
Of finer form or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown—
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
Served, too, in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow.
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear!
A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild, luxuriant ringlets hid,
Where glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye.
Not Katrine in her mirror blue
Gives back the shaggy banks more true
Than every free-born glance confessed
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,

Or woe or pity claimed a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
Or tale of injury called forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unrevealed
With maiden pride the maid concealed,
Yet not less purely felt the flame;
Oh, need I tell that passion's name?

Impatient at hearing no second blast from the horn, the damsel called out, "Father!" and then asked, "Malcolm, was thine the blast?" At this point the huntsman came forward.

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage,
Yet had not quenched the open truth
And fiery vehemence of youth;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould,
For hardy sports or contest bold;
And though in peaceful garb arrayed,
And weaponless, except his blade,
His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armour trod the shore.
Slighting the petty need he showed,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flowed fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy;
Yet seemed that tone and gesture bland
Less used to sue than to command.

After holding a short parley with him Ellen took him into her skiff, and he was carried to a woody island and led to a lodge constructed of tree trunks. Here he was entertained at

supper, and introduced to an elderly lady. But although he announced himself as "James Fitz-James, the Knight of Snowdoun," it was in vain that he endeavoured to elicit the name and history of the two ladies. He retired to rest without being told anything about them, though their manner showed them to be of gentle birth; and he departed the next day having learned nothing more. In truth, the younger lady was the daughter of the great Douglas, now a fugitive from the wrath of the king, and protected by the fierce marauder, Sir Roderick Dhu, while the elderly lady, who for years had acted a mother's part to Ellen Douglas, was Sir Roderick's mother, the Lady Margaret. Sir Roderick was in love with Ellen, and on the very day of the stranger's departure he proposed that her hand should be given him in marriage, and that Douglas and he should form a league against the king, who was coming to the Highlands on the pretence of hunting the game. Douglas, however, refused both of these alliances, and offered to find refuge elsewhere; for Ellen's heart was given to the gallant young Malcolm Graeme, who, though a silent auditor of Sir Roderick's proposals, was nearly dragged into a quarrel with his rival just prior to receiving from him a safe conduct home. The next day Sir Roderick sent round the Fiery Cross to all his vassals. He slew a goat, the patriarch of the flock, and a priest called Brian, having formed a cross of a cubit's length from rods of yew, first scathed it in a fire made of juniper and rowan branches, and then quenched its flames in the blood of the goat, meanwhile invoking curses on all clansmen who, thus summoned to their chieftain's aid, disobeyed the signal.

"When flits this cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's blood drench his hearth!
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark!
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside!"
Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
"Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave.

"The muster-place be Lanrick mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew;
High stood the henchman on the prow;
So rapidly the bargemen row,
The bubbles, where they launched the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.
Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! Such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bent 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roebuck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap:
Parched are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed
Are in thy course—speed, Malise, speed!

Meantime Douglas and his daughter withdrew from the island, and took up their abode in a wild and lonely grot on Mount Benvenue, called the Goblin's Cave.

Canto II

But Douglas did not remain long at the Goblin's Cave. One morning he left this hiding-place, appointing Ellen to meet him at Cambus-kenneth's Abbey if he did not return by evening; and she could not but believe that, conceiving himself to be the cause of the coming strife, he had gone to give himself up to the king as a hostage for Malcolm Graeme and Roderick Dhu. Meantime, during the Douglas's absence, the Knight of Snowdoun, still dressed in Lincoln green, returned, declared his love for Ellen, and having been told that her heart was already bestowed on another, handed her a ring given him by the king, which, he said, would secure for its holder such recompense as he—the holder—might name. On his way back the knight would have been lured by his guide into an ambush prepared for him by Roderick Dhu's clansmen, had not a crazed and captive Lowland maid named Blanche of Devan warned him of it in a song. He saved his own life, but though he could not save that of poor Blanche, who fell mortally wounded by an arrow shot by the treacherous guide, he managed to avenge her by killing her assassin, and having dipped a tress of her hair in her blood, placed it in his helm. At last, as evening came on, he found a mountaineer sitting by a watch fire, and, having asked for rest, food, a fire, and a guide, was promised all four, though he frankly avowed himself no friend to Roderick Dhu. The next day, at dawn, the Gael, according to his promise, proceeded to put his guest safely on the way to Stirling; but as they went along, the knight inveighed so severely against Sir Roderick, and expressed such an ardent desire to confront that rebel chieftain and his clan, that his guide could no longer restrain himself.

"Have, then, thy wish!" He whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curfew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,

The rushes and the willow wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of bloom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.
That whistle garrisoned the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood, and still.
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
These are Clan Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon, I am Roderick Dhu!"
Fitz-James was brave—though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He manned himself with dauntless air,
Returned the chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before:
"Come one, come all! This rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."
Sir Roderick marked—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foeman worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand;
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,

In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;
It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had tossed in air
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,
The next but swept a lone hill-side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide:
The sun's last glance was glinted back
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green and cold grey stone.

Greatly impressed by this display, the knight followed his guide, who again promised to conduct him safely to Coilantogle Ford. But when they reached this spot Roderick challenged the knight to fight, saying that the hermit priest Brian had prophesied:

"Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife."

The knight, being generously disinclined to engage in mortal combat with one who had saved his life, urged that as he had slain the guide, Red Murdoch, Roderick should yield to fate and go to King James at Stirling, where he—the knight—would guarantee that matters in dispute could be adjusted.

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye—
"Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:
My clansman's blood demands revenge.
Not yet prepared? By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light
As that of some vain carpet knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."

"I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone!"

In the combat that ensued the expert but weaker Fitz-James brought Roderick to his knee and called on him to surrender. But the Gael—

Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel
Through bars of brass and triple steel!
They tug, they strain! down, down they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
His knee was planted on his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright!
But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleamed on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

Fitz-James then blew a blast on his bugle, and four mounted squires appeared, clad in Lincoln green. Bidding them attend to Roderick and to bring him on to Stirling, he mounted one of the horses they led and rode at full speed for the Northern capital. Meantime, Douglas had arrived at Stirling, resolved to give himself up to the king; but, finding that the burghers were holding their sports that day, he resolved to take part in them, and to show his sovereign how little age had tamed his sinews. So successful was he that he overcame all rivals at archery, at wrestling, and at throwing the stone. But the king handed him the prizes with a cold glance; and when he proclaimed his identity and offered himself as a victim to atone the war, he was merely ordered into arrest. This harsh action stirred the burghers to a riot which Douglas had some difficulty in allaying. But eventually the crowd's wild fury subsided; and in order to prevent the useless shedding of blood a messenger who brought King James news of the gathering of Roderick's clansmen was bidden tell them that their chief had been brought in a prisoner, and that Douglas had made his submission. Shortly afterwards Ellen, accompanied by her father's minstrel, arrived at Stirling, and having shown the royal signet ring, was conducted to the king's presence; while Allan, having asked to see his master's face, was shown into a prison-room, where he found not the Douglas but the wounded Roderick Dhu. Having been assured that Ellen, his mother, and the Douglas were safe and well, the chief of the Clan Alpine besought the minstrel to give him an account of the battle in which his vessels had been engaged; and Allan was just proceeding to tell how, in the thick of the conflict, fighting was stopped by the arrival of the king's herald, when Roderick gave up the ghost. Meantime Ellen, having met Fitz-James again at the castle, was conducted by him to the king's court, where, to her consternation, she quickly discovered that the Knight of Snowdoun was none other than the Scottish king. With what joy she was reunited to her father—now reconciled to King James—with what deep happiness she met again her lover and received the royal sanction of their betrothal, the reader will scarcely need to be informed.

SHAKESPEARE

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

GERTRUDE, queen of Denmark, becoming a widow by the sudden death of the king, in less than two months after his death married his brother Claudius. This Claudius did no ways resemble her late husband in the

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Many uncertainties cluster around the figure of William Shakespeare. The date of his birth is not positively known, but as he was baptised on April 26, 1564, and as it was usual to christen infants when three days old, it is assumed that he was born on April 23. The same date of the same month in 1616 was his death. A century ago, George Stevens wrote: "All we know with any degree of certainty concerning Shakespeare is —that he was born at Stratford-on-Avon, married and had children there, went to London, where he commenced acting, and wrote plays and poems, returned to Stratford, made his will, died, and was buried." Tradition says that the poet abandoned his native town on account of a poaching incident, and that he subsequently became a schoolmaster. The plays epitomised here are from the pen of Charles and Mary Lamb, and although in this particular form they constitute a departure from the plan generally followed in THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS, yet it was felt to be both a useful and a justifiable one, both on account of the high reputation which Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare" deservedly enjoy, and also because Shakespeare, perhaps, alone among authors, is already too securely embedded in our thoughts, and too corporate a part of the English language, to stand in need of any lesser aid. In the composition of the "Tales," Charles Lamb (who was born in London on February 10, 1775, and died there on December 27, 1834) is held to have been responsible for the tragedies and his sister Mary for the comedies, and apart from the exquisite literary taste which their undertaking displays, and without which it could never have survived, it possesses an added interest for us in the fact that it constituted the first literary success of one who was destined later to gain fresh immortality as among the most perfect and gentle of English essayists. The "Tales" were published in 1807, and were written as a contribution to William Godwin's Juvenile Library.

qualities of his person or his mind, but was as contemptible in outward appearance as he was base and unworthy in disposition.

But upon no one did this unadvised action of the queen make such impression as upon young Hamlet, who loved and venerated the memory of his dead father almost to idolatry, and being of a nice sense of honour, and a most exquisite practiser of propriety himself, did sorely take to heart this unworthy conduct of his mother Gertrude.

It was not that the prospect of exclusion from the throne, his lawful inheritance, weighed so much upon his spirits; but what so galled him, and took away all his cheerful spirits, was, that his mother had shown herself so forgetful to his father's memory; and such a father! who had been to her so loving and so gentle a husband! She had married again, married his uncle, her dear husband's brother, in itself a highly improper and unlawful marriage, from the nearness of relationship, but made much more so by the indecent haste with which it was concluded.

In vain was all that his mother Gertrude or the king could do to contrive to divert him; he still appeared in

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Except "Antony and Cleopatra," which exceeds it by sixty lines, "Hamlet, or the Prince of Denmark," is the longest of all Shakespeare's plays. It was produced in 1602, and two years later there appeared a printed version of "The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," by William Shakespeare, newly imprinted and enlarged. For the actual story, the dramatist was probably indebted to a dramatic version by another writer, which obtained great vogue on the stage in 1589. As regards the play itself, it is rather a masterly philosophical effort, a study of a moral prisoning, than a piece of dramatic literature purely and simply. Yet its dramatic qualities cannot be ignored: proof of which is its undiminished popularity wherever the English language is spoken, and also on the European continent. The action moves slowly, at times it does not move at all; still the very personality—complex and subtle as it is—of Hamlet himself compels attention and carries everything before it. "'Hamlet,'" said the great French critic Taine, "is Shakespeare, and in the whole of his gallery of portraits Shakespeare has painted himself in the most striking of all."

court in a suit of black, as mourning for the king his father's death; which mode of dress he had never laid aside, not even in compliment to his mother upon the day she was married; nor could he be brought to join in any of the festivities or rejoicing of that (as appeared to him) disgraceful day.

A rumour had reached the ear of young Hamlet, that an apparition, exactly resembling the dead king, his father, had been seen by the soldiers upon watch, on the platform before the palace at midnight, for two or three nights successively.

The young prince, strangely amazed at their relation, which was too consistent and agreeing with itself to disbelieve, concluded that it was his father's ghost which they had seen, and determined to take his watch with the soldiers that night, that he might have a chance of seeing it. For he reasoned with himself, that such an appearance did not come for nothing, but that the ghost had something to impart, and though it had been silent hitherto, yet it would speak to him. And he waited with impatience for the coming of night.

At the sight of his father's spirit, Hamlet was struck with a sudden surprise and fear. He at first called upon the angels and heavenly ministers to defend him, for he knew not whether it were a good spirit or bad; whether it came for good or evil; but he gradually assumed more courage; and his father (as it seemed to him) looked upon him so piteously. He called him by his name, Hamlet, King, Father! and conjured him that he would tell the reason why he had left his grave, where they had seen him quietly bestowed, to come again and visit the earth and the moonlight. And the ghost beckoned to Hamlet, that he should go with him to some more removed place, where they might be alone; and Horatio and Marcellus would have dissuaded the young prince from following it, but their counsels and entreaties could not alter Hamlet's determination.

When they were alone together, the spirit broke silence, and told him that he was the ghost of Hamlet, his father, who had been cruelly murdered. That as he was sleeping in his garden, his custom always in the afternoon, his treasonous brother stole upon him in his sleep, and poured the juice of poisonous henbane into his ears. Thus sleeping, by a brother's hand he was cut off at once from his crown, his queen, and his life: and he adjured Hamlet, if he did ever his dear father love, that he would revenge his foul murder. By no means to act any violence against the person of his mother, but to leave her to heaven, and to the stings and thorns of conscience. And Hamlet promised to observe the ghost's direction in all things, and the ghost vanished.

And when Hamlet was left alone, he took up a solemn resolution, that nothing should live in his brain but the memory of what the ghost had told him, and enjoined him to do. And Hamlet related the particulars of the conversation which had passed to none but his dear friend Horatio; and he enjoined both to him and Marcellus the strictest secrecy as to what they had seen that night.

He then took up a strange resolution, from that time to counterfeit as if he were really and truly mad; thinking that he would be less an object of suspicion when his uncle should believe him incapable of any serious project.

Before Hamlet fell into the melancholy way which has been related, he had dearly loved a fair maid called Ophelia, the daughter of Polonius, the king's chief counsellor in affairs of state. He had sent her letters and rings, and made many tenders of his affections to her, and she had given belief to his vows and importunities. But the melancholy which he fell into latterly had made him neglect her, and he affected to treat her with unkindness, and a sort of rudeness: but she, good lady,

rather than reproach him with being false to her, persuaded herself that it was nothing but the disease in his mind, which had made him less observant of her than formerly. In one of these moments, when he thought that his treatment of this gentle lady had been unreasonably harsh, he wrote her a letter full of wild starts of passion, and in extravagant terms, such as agreed with his supposed madness, but mixed with some gentle touches of affection, which could not but show to this honoured lady that a deep love for her yet lay at the bottom of his heart. This letter Ophelia dutifully showed to her father, and the old man thought himself bound to communicate it to the king and queen, who from that time supposed that the true cause of Hamlet's madness was love.

But Hamlet's malady lay deeper than she supposed, or than could be so cured. His father's ghost, which he had seen, still haunted his imagination, and the sacred injunction to revenge his murder gave him no rest till it was accomplished. Every hour of delay seemed to him a sin, and a violation of his father's commands. Yet his very melancholy, and the dejection of spirits he had so long been in, produced an irresoluteness and wavering of purpose, which kept him from proceeding to extremities. Moreover, he could not help having some scruples upon his mind, whether the spirit which he had seen was indeed his father. While he was in this irresolute mind, there came to the court certain players, in whom Hamlet formerly used to take delight.

Hamlet welcomed his old friends, the players, and remembering how a certain speech had formerly given him pleasure, requested the player to repeat it; which he did in so lively a manner, that not only it drew tears from all that stood by, but even the player himself delivered it with a broken voice and real tears. This put Hamlet upon thinking, if that player could so work himself up to passion by a mere fictitious speech, to weep for one

that he had never seen, how dull was he, who having a real king and a dear father murdered, was yet so little moved that his revenge all this while had seemed to have slept in dull and muddy forgetfulness! and while he meditated on and the powerful effects which a good play has upon the spectator, he remembered the instance of some murderer who, seeing a murder on the stage, was by the mere force of the scene and resemblance of circumstances so affected, that on the spot he confessed the crime which he had committed. And he determined that these players should play something like the murder of his father before his uncle, and he would watch narrowly what effect it might have upon him, and from his looks he would be able to gather with more certainty if he were the murderer or not.

At the representation of this play, the king, who did not know the trap which was laid for him, was present, with his queen and the whole court: Hamlet sitting attentively near him to observe his looks. The play began with a conversation between Gonzago and his wife, in which the lady made many protestations of love, and of never marrying a second husband, if she should outlive Gonzago, adding that no woman did so, but those wicked women who kill their first husbands. Hamlet observed the king, his uncle, change colour at this expression. But when Lucianus, according to the story, came to poison Gonzago sleeping in the garden, the king was unable to sit out the rest of the play, but on a sudden calling for lights to his chamber, and affecting or partly feeling a sudden sickness, he abruptly left the theatre. Hamlet had seen enough to be satisfied that the words of the ghost were true, and no illusion; and in a fit of gaiety, like that which comes over a man who suddenly has some great doubt or scruple resolved, he swore to Horatio, that he would take the ghost's word for a thousand pounds. But before he could make up his resolution as to what measures of revenge he should take, he

was sent for by the queen his mother, to a private conference in her closet.

Hamlet being come to his mother, she began to tax him in the roundest way with his actions and behaviour, and she told him that he had given great offence to his father, meaning the king, his uncle. Hamlet, sorely indignant, replied, "Mother, you have much offended my father." The queen said that was but an idle answer. "As good as the question deserved," said Hamlet. The queen asked him if he had forgotten who it was he was speaking to? "Alas!" replied Hamlet, "I wish I could forget. You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife; and you are my mother: I wish you were not what you are." "Nay, then," said the queen, "if you show me so little respect, I will set those to you that can speak." Affrighted at his earnest manner, she cried out; and a voice was heard from behind the hangings, "Help, help, the queen!" which Hamlet hearing, and verily thinking that it was the king himself there concealed, he drew his sword and stabbed at the place where the voice came from. But when he dragged for the body, it was not the king, but Polonius, the old officious counsellor, that by the king's directions had planted himself as a spy behind the hangings. "Oh, me!" exclaimed the queen, "what a rash and bloody deed have you done!" "A bloody deed, mother," replied Hamlet, "but not so bad as yours, who killed a king, and married his brother."

And now this virtuous prince did in moving terms represent to the queen the heinousness of her offence. He said she had done such a deed that the heavens blushed for it, and the earth was sick of her because of it. And he showed her two pictures, the one of the late king, her first husband, and the other of the present king, her second husband, and he bade her mark the difference. And the queen was sore ashamed that he should so turn her eyes inward upon her soul, which she now saw so black and deformed. And he asked her how she could

continue to live with this man, and be a wife to him,—and just as he spoke, the ghost of his father, such as he had lately seen it, entered the room, and Hamlet, in great terror, asked what it would have; and the ghost said that it came to remind him of the revenge he had promised, and bade him speak to his mother, for the grief and terror she was in would else kill her. It then vanished, neither could he by pointing to where it stood, or by any description, make his mother perceive it; who was terribly frightened all this while to hear him conversing, as it seemed to her, with nothing; and she imputed it to the disorder of his mind. But Hamlet begged her not to flatter her wicked soul in such a manner as to think that it was his madness, and not her own offences, which had brought his father's spirit again on the earth. And he begged of her with tears, to confess herself to heaven for what was past, and for the future to avoid the company of the king, and be no more as a wife to him. And she, promising to observe his directions, the conference ended.

The unfortunate death of Polonius gave the king a pretence for sending Hamlet out of the kingdom. This subtle king, under pretence of providing for Hamlet's safety, that he might not be called to account for Polonius' death, caused him to be conveyed on board a ship bound for England, under the care of two courtiers, by whom he despatched letters to the English court, which in that time paid tribute to Denmark, requiring for special reasons there pretended, that Hamlet should be put to death as soon as he landed on English ground. Hamlet, suspecting some treachery, in the night-time secretly got at the letters, and skilfully erasing his own name, he, in the stead of it, put in the names of those two courtiers who had the charge of him. Soon after the ship was attacked by pirates, and a sea-fight commenced; in the course of which Hamlet, desirous to show his valour, with sword in hand singly boarded the enemy's vessel;

while his own ship, in a cowardly manner, bore away, and left him to his fate.

The pirates set Hamlet on shore at the nearest port in Denmark. He quickly reached home, where a sad spectacle offered itself the first thing to his eyes. This was the funeral of the young and beautiful Ophelia.

The wits of this young lady had begun to turn ever since her poor father's death. That he should die a violent death, and by the hands of the prince whom she loved, so affected this tender young maid, that in a little time she grew perfectly distracted. There was a willow which grew slanting over a brook, and reflected its leaves on the stream. To this brook she came one day when she was unwatched, with garlands she had been making, mixed up of daisies and nettles, flowers and weeds together, and clambering up to hang her garland upon the boughs of the willow, a bough broke, and precipitated her into the water, where her clothes, heavy with the wet, pulled her to a miserable death. It was the funeral of this fair maid which her brother Laertes was celebrating, the king and queen and whole court being present, when Hamlet arrived.

Hamlet knew not what all this show imported, but stood on one side, not inclining to interrupt the ceremony. He saw the flowers strewed upon her grave, which the queen herself threw in. And he heard her brother wish that violets might spring from her grave: and he saw him leap into the grave all frantic with grief. And Hamlet's love for this fair maid came back to him, and he could not bear that a brother should show so much transport of grief. Then discovering himself, he leaped into the grave where Laertes was, all as frantic or more than he, and Laertes knowing him to be Hamlet, who had been the cause of his father's and sister's death, grappled him by the throat as an enemy, till the attendants parted them: and Hamlet, after the funeral, excused his hasty act in throwing himself into the grave as if to brave Laertes.

But out of the grief and anger of Laertes, Hamlet's wicked uncle contrived destruction for Hamlet. He set on Laertes, under cover of peace and reconciliation, to challenge Hamlet to a friendly trial of skill at fencing, which Hamlet accepting, a day was appointed to try the match. At this match all the court was present, and Laertes, by direction of the king, prepared a poisoned weapon. At first Laertes did but play with Hamlet, and suffered him to gain some advantages, which the dissembling king magnified and extolled beyond measure, but after a few passes, Laertes growing warm made a deadly thrust at Hamlet with his poisoned weapon, and gave him a mortal blow. Hamlet incensed, but not knowing the whole of the treachery, in the scuffle exchanged his own innocent weapon for Laertes' deadly one, and with a thrust of Laertes' own sword repaid Laertes home. In this instant the queen shrieked out that she was poisoned. She had inadvertently drunk out of a poisoned bowl which the king had prepared for Hamlet, and immediately died, exclaiming with her last breath that she was poisoned. Hamlet, suspecting some treachery, ordered the doors to be shut, while he sought it out. Laertes told him to seek no farther, for he was the traitor; and feeling his life go away with the wound which Hamlet had given him, he told Hamlet of the envenomed point, and said that Hamlet had not half an hour to live. Begging forgiveness of Hamlet, he died, with his last words accusing the king of being the contriver of the mischief. When Hamlet saw his end draw near, there being yet some venom left upon the sword, he suddenly turned upon his false uncle, and thrust the point of it to his heart, fulfilling the promise which he had made to his father's spirit, whose foul murder was now revenged upon the murderer. Then Hamlet turned to his dear friend Horatio, who had been spectator of this fatal tragedy; and with his dying breath requested him that he would tell his story to the world, and Horatio

promised that he would make a true report, as one that was privy to all the circumstances. And, thus satisfied, the noble heart of Hamlet cracked; and Horatio and the bystanders with many tears commended the spirit of this sweet prince to the guardianship of angels.

Macbeth

THE two Scottish generals, Macbeth and Banquo, returning victorious from their great battle, the way lay over a blasted heath, where they were stopped by the strange appearance of three figures like women, except that they had beards, and their withered skins and wild attire made them look not like any earthly creatures. The first of them saluted Macbeth with the title of thane of Glamis. The general was not a little startled to find himself known by such creatures; but how much more, when the second of them followed up that salute by giving him the title of thane of Cawdor, to which honour he had no pretensions; and again the third bid him "All hail! king that shalt be hereafter!" Then turning to Banquo, they pronounced him to be *lesser than Macbeth and greater! not so happy, but much happier!* and prophesied that though he should never reign, yet his sons after him should be kings in Scotland. They then

"Macbeth" is a tragedy on the same high artistic level as "Othello." The subject, drawn from the many legends that clustered around the name of Macbeth, and collected by John Fordun and Hector Balce, and reproduced by Holinshed in his "Chronicle of Scottish History," made no less an appeal to the virile imagination of the poet than it subsequently did, in dramatic form, to King James and his Court—a fact perhaps partly due to the sympathy which Shakespeare lavished on the King's ancestor, Banquo. Rapid as the action of the play is, the interest does not depend solely upon the story, but rather upon the characterisation of Macbeth and his wife, both of whom are depicted with extraordinary subtleness and concentrated insight. "Macbeth" was begun in 1605, and completed the following year.

turned into air, and vanished; by which the generals knew them to be the weird sisters, or witches.

While they stood pondering on the strangeness of this adventure, there arrived certain messengers from the king who were empowered by him to confer upon Macbeth the dignity of thane of Cawdor, an event miraculously corresponding with the prediction of the witches.

Macbeth had a wife, to whom he communicated the strange prediction of the weird sisters, and its partial accomplishment, and being a bad, ambitious woman, she spurred on the reluctant purpose of Macbeth, and did not cease to represent the murder of the king as a step absolutely necessary to the whole fulfilment of the flattering prophecy.

It happened at this time that the king came to Macbeth's house, attended by his two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, and a numerous train of thanes and attendants, the more to honour Macbeth for the triumphal success of his wars.

The king entered well-pleased with the place, and not less so with the attentions and respect of his honoured hostess, lady Macbeth, who had the art of covering treacherous purposes with smiles.

The king being tired with his journey, went early to bed, and in his state-room two grooms of his chamber (as was the custom) slept beside him.

Now was the middle of night, the time when lady Macbeth waked to plot the murder of the king. She would not have undertaken a deed so abhorrent to her sex, but that she feared her husband's nature, that it was too full of the milk of human kindness, to do a contrived murder. So with her own hands armed with a dagger, she approached the king's bed; having taken care to ply the grooms of his chamber so with wine, that they slept intoxicated, and careless of their charge. There lay King Duncan in a sound sleep after the fatigues of his journey, and there was something in his face as he slept, which

resembled her own father, and she had not the courage to proceed.

She returned to confer with her husband, whose resolution had begun to stagger. He considered that there were strong reasons against the deed. In the first place, he was not only a subject, but a near kinsman to the king, and he had been his host and entertainer that day, whose duty, by the laws of hospitality, it was to shut the door against his murderers, not bear the knife himself. Besides, by the favours of the king, Macbeth stood high in the opinion of all sorts of men, and how would those honours be stained by the reputation of so foul a murder.

But she being a woman not easily shaken from her evil purpose, began to pour in at his ears words which infused a portion of her own spirit into his mind, assigning reason upon reason why he should not shrink from that he had undertaken! how easy the deed was; how soon it would be over; and how the action of one short night would give to all their nights and days to come sovereign sway and royalty! Then she added, how practicable it was to lay the guilt of the deed upon the drunken sleepy grooms. And she so chastised his sluggish resolutions that he summoned up courage to the bloody business which he had sworn to perform.

So, taking the dagger in his hand, he softly stole in the dark to the room where Duncan lay; and getting rid of his fear, he entered the king's room, whom he despatched with one stroke of his dagger.

Tortured with visions, in which a voice cried: "Sleep no more: Macbeth doth murder sleep," he returned to his listening wife in so distracted a state that she reproached him with his want of firmness, and sent him to wash his hands of the blood which stained them, while she took the dagger, with purpose to stain the cheeks of the grooms with blood, to make it seem their guilt.

Morning came, and with it the discovery of the murder; and though Macbeth and his lady made great show

of grief, yet the entire suspicion fell upon Macbeth. Duncan's two sons fled. Malcolm to the English court; and the youngest, Donalbain, made his escape to Ireland.

The king's sons, who should have succeeded him, having thus vacated the throne, Macbeth as next heir was crowned king, and thus the prediction of the weird sisters was literally accomplished.

Now though placed so high, Macbeth and his queen could not forget the prophecy of the weird sisters, that, though Macbeth should be king, yet not his children, but the children of Banquo, should be kings after him. So they made a great supper, to which they invited all the chief thanes; and among the rest, with marks of particular respect, Banquo and his son Fleance were invited. But the way by which Banquo was to pass to the palace at night was beset by murderers appointed by Macbeth, who stabbed Banquo; but in the scuffle Fleance escaped, from whom descended a race of monarchs who afterwards filled the Scottish throne, and under whom the two crowns of England and Scotland were afterwards united.

At supper, the queen played the hostess with a gracefulness which conciliated every one present, and Macbeth discoursed freely with his thanes and nobles, saying, that all that was honourable in the country was under his roof, if he had but his friend Banquo present. Just at these words the ghost of Banquo entered the room and placed himself on the chair which Macbeth was about to occupy. At which horrible sight Macbeth's cheeks turned white with fear, and he stood quite unmanned with his eyes fixed upon the ghost. His queen and all the nobles, who saw nothing, but perceived him gazing (as they thought) upon an empty chair, took it for a fit of distraction. But Macbeth continued to see the ghost, and gave no heed to all they could say, while he addressed it with distracted words, yet so significant, that his queen, fearing the dread-

ful secret would be disclosed, in great haste dismissed the guests, excusing the infirmity of Macbeth as a disorder he was often troubled with.

With these miserable thoughts the guilty couple found no peace and Macbeth determined once more to seek out the weird sisters, and know from them the worst.

He sought them in a cave upon the heath; where they, who knew by foresight of his coming, were engaged in preparing their dreadful charms, by which they conjured up infernal spirits to reveal to them futurity. The first arose in the likeness of an armed head, and he called Macbeth by name, and bid him beware of the thane of Fife. The second spirit arose in the likeness of a bloody child, and he bid him laugh to scorn the power of man, for none of woman born should have power to hurt him; and he advised him to be bloody, bold, and resolute. Which spirit being dismissed, a third arose in the form of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand. He said that Macbeth should never be vanquished, until the wood of Birnam to Dunsinane Hill should come against him. "Sweet bodements! good!" cried Macbeth. "But my heart throbs to know one thing. Tell me, if your art can tell so much, if Banquo's issue shall ever reign in this kingdom?" Here the cauldron sank into the ground, and a noise of music was heard, and eight shadows, like kings, passed by Macbeth, and Banquo last, who bore a glass which showed the figures of many more, and Banquo all bloody smiled upon Macbeth, and pointed to them; by which Macbeth knew that these were the posterity of Banquo, who should reign after him in Scotland; and the witches, with a sound of soft music, and with dancing, making a show of duty and welcome to Macbeth, vanished.

The first thing he heard when he got out of the witches' cave, was that Macduff, thane of Fife, had fled to England, to join the army which was forming against him under Prince Malcolm. Macbeth, stung with rage,

set upon the castle of Macduff, and put his wife and children, whom the thane had left behind, to the sword.

These and such-like deeds alienated the minds of all his chief nobility from him. Everybody began to hate the tyrant; nobody loved or honoured him; but all suspected him, and he began to envy the condition of Duncan, whom he had murdered, who slept soundly in his grave.

While these things were acting, the queen, who had been the sole partner in his wickedness, in whose bosom he could sometimes seek a momentary repose from those terrible dreams which afflicted them both nightly, died,—it is supposed, by her own hands, unable to bear the remorse of guilt, and public hate.

Macbeth now grew careless of life, and wished for death; but the near approach of Malcolm's army roused in him what remained of his ancient courage, and he determined to die, as he expressed it, "with armour on his back." So he shut himself up in his castle and sullenly waited the approach of Malcolm; when, upon a day, there came a messenger to him who averred, that as he stood upon his watch on the hill, he looked towards Birnam, and to his thinking the wood began to move! "Liar and slave!" cried Macbeth; "if thou speakest false, thou shalt hang alive upon the next tree, till famine end thee. If thy tale be true, I care not if thou dost as much by me": for Macbeth now began to faint in resolution, and to doubt the equivocal speeches of the spirits.

The strange appearance which had given the messenger an idea of a wood moving is easily solved. When the besieging army marched through the wood of Birnam, Malcolm, like a skilful general, instructed his soldiers to hew down every one a bough and bear it before him, by way of concealing the true numbers of his host.

And now a severe skirmishing took place, in which Macbeth, though feebly supported by those who called themselves his friends, yet fought with the extreme of

rage and valour, cutting to pieces all who were opposed to him, till he came to where Macduff was fighting.

Then Macbeth remembered the words of the spirit, how none of woman born should hurt him; and smiling confidently he said to Macduff, "Thou losest thy labour, Macduff. I bear a charmed life, which must not yield to one of woman born."

"Despair thy charm," said Macduff, "and let that lying spirit whom thou hast served, tell thee, that Macduff was never born of woman, never as the ordinary manner of men is to be born, but was untimely taken from his mother."

"Accursed be the tongue which tells me so," said the trembling Macbeth, who felt his last hold of confidence give way. "I will not live to kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet, and to be baited with the curses of the rabble. Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane, and thou opposed to me, who wast never born of woman, yet will I try the last." With these frantic words he threw himself upon Macduff, who, after a severe struggle, in the end overcame him, and cutting off his head, made a present of it to the young and lawful king, Malcolm; who at last took upon him the government of which he had so long been deprived.

The Merchant of Venice

SHYLOCK, the Jew, lived at Venice. He was an usurer who had amassed an immense fortune by lending money at great interest to Christian merchants. Shylock, being a hard-hearted man, exacted the payment of the money

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With the possible exception of "The Tempest," "The Merchant of Venice" has had a greater popularity, both among readers and audiences alike, than any other of Shakespeare's comedies. The reasons for this preference are not far to seek.

he lent with such severity that he was much disliked by all good men, and particularly by Antonio, a young merchant of Venice; and Shylock as much hated Antonio, because he used to lend money to people in distress, and would never take any interest for the money he lent.

Antonio was greatly beloved by all his fellow-citizens; but the friend who was nearest and dearest to his heart was Bassanio, a noble Venetian, who had nearly exhausted his little fortune by living in too expensive a manner for his slender means. Whenever Bassanio wanted money, Antonio assisted him; and it seemed as if they had but one heart and one purse between them.

One day Bassanio came to Antonio, and told him that he wished to repair his fortune by a wealthy marriage with a lady whom he dearly loved, whose father, that was lately dead, had left her sole heiress to a large estate; but not having money to furnish himself with an appearance befitting the lover of so rich an heiress, he besought Antonio to add to the many favours he had shown him, by lending him three thousand ducats.

Antonio had no money by him at that time to lend his friend; so the two friends went together to Shylock, and Antonio asked the Jew to lend him three thousand ducats upon any interest he should require, to be paid out of the merchandise contained in his ships at sea. On this, Shylock thought within himself, "If I can catch him on

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Although the theme of the main plot is almost tragic in its conception, yet the characters are marked with discrimination and variety, and a wholesome, sweet—almost idyllic—atmosphere pervades it throughout. For the incidents Shakespeare was indebted to more than one old legend and old play. The first-named occurs in Giovanni Firnentine's "Il Pecorone," where a Christian is rescued from discharging a debt with a pound of his own flesh, through the advocacy of a "Lady of Belmont." A similar story appears in "Gesta Romanorum," and the legend of the caskets and the bonds also figure in another part of the same work. The earliest version of the "Merchant of Venice" was produced in August, 1594, but was not published until 1600, when two versions, compiled from different stage copies, appeared.

the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him."

Antonio, finding he was musing within himself, said to him, "Shylock, do you hear? will you lend the money?" To which question the Jew replied, "Signior Antonio, on the Rialto many a time and often you have railed to me about my moneys and my usuries, and I have borne it with a patient shrug, for sufferance is the badge of all our tribe; and then you have called me unbeliever, cut-throat dog, and spit upon my Jewish garments, and spurned at me with your foot, as if I was a cur. Has a dog money? Is it possible a cur should lend three thousand ducats?" Antonio replied, "I am as like to spit on you again, and spurn you too. If you will lend me this money, lend it not to me as to a friend, but rather lend it to me as to an enemy, that, if I break, you may with better face exact the penalty."—"Why, look you," said Shylock, "how you storm! I would be friends with you, and have your love. I will forget the shames you have put upon me. I will supply your wants, and take no interest for my money."

This seemingly kind offer greatly surprised Antonio; and then Shylock, still pretending kindness, and that all he did was to gain Antonio's love, again said he would lend him the three thousand ducats, and take no interest for his money; only Antonio should go with him to a lawyer, and there sign in merry sport a bond, that if he did not repay the money by a certain day, he would forfeit a pound of flesh, to be cut off from any part of his body that Shylock pleased. "Content," said Antonio; but Bassanio said Antonio should not sign to such a bond for him. But still Antonio insisted that he would sign it, for that before the day of payment came, his ships would return laden with many times the value of the money.

The rich heiress that Bassanio wished to marry lived near Venice, at a place called Belmont. Her name was Portia, and in the graces of her person and her mind

she was nothing inferior to that Portia, of whom we read, who was Cato's daughter, and the wife of Brutus.

Bassanio being so kindly supplied with money by his friend Antonio, set out for Belmont with a splendid train, and attended by a gentleman of the name of Gratiano; and, proving successful in his suit, Portia in a short time consented to accept of him for a husband.

Bassanio confessed to Portia that he had no fortune, and that his high birth and noble ancestry was all that he could boast of; but she, who loved him for his worthy qualities, and had riches enough not to regard wealth in a husband, answered with a graceful modesty, that she would wish herself a thousand times more fair, and ten thousand times more rich, to be more worthy of him. "But yesterday, Bassanio," she said, "I was the lady of this fair mansion, queen of myself, and mistress over these servants; and now this house, these servants, and myself, are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring," presenting a ring to Bassanio.

Bassanio could not express his joy and reverence to the dear lady who so honoured him, by anything but broken words of love and thankfulness; and taking the ring, he vowed never to part with it.

Gratiano then said that he loved the lady Portia's fair waiting gentlewoman Nerissa, and that she had promised to be his wife, if her lady married Bassanio. Portia asked Nerissa if this was true. Nerissa replied, "Madam, it is so, if you approve of it." Portia willingly consenting, Bassanio pleasantly said, "Then our wedding-feast shall be much honoured by your marriage, Gratiano."

The happiness of these lovers was sadly crossed at this moment by the entrance of a messenger, who brought a letter from Antonio containing fearful tidings. When Bassanio read Antonio's letter, Portia feared it was to tell him of the death of some dear friend, he looked so pale; and inquiring what was the news which had so distressed him, he said: "Gentle lady, when I first imparted

my love to you, I freely told you all the wealth I had ran in my veins; but I should have told you that I had less than nothing, being in debt." Bassanio then told Portia what had been here related, of his borrowing the money of Antonio, and of Antonio's procuring it of Shylock the Jew, and then Bassanio read Antonio's letter; the words of which were, "Sweet Bassanio, my ships are all lost, my bond to the Jew is forfeited, and since in paying it is impossible I should live, I could wish to see you at my death; notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if your love for me do not persuade you to come, let not my letter." "O, my dear love," said Portia, "you shall have gold to pay the money twenty times over, before this kind friend shall lose a hair by my Bassanio's fault; and as you are so dearly bought, I will dearly love you." Portia then said she would be married to Bassanio before he set out, to give him a legal right to her money; and that same day they were married, and Gratiano was also married to Nerissa; and Bassanio and Gratiano, the instant they were married, set out in great haste for Venice, where Bassanio found Antonio in prison, the day of payment being past.

Portia had a relation who was a counsellor in the law. To this gentleman, whose name was Bellario, she wrote, and stating the case to him, desired his opinion, and that with his advice he would also send her the dress worn by a counsellor. When the messenger returned, he brought letters from Bellario of advice how to proceed, and also everything necessary for her equipment.

Portia dressed herself and her maid Nerissa in men's apparel, and putting on the robes of a counsellor, she took Nerissa along with her as a clerk; and setting out immediately, they arrived at Venice on the very day of the trial. The cause was just going to be heard before the duke and senators of Venice in the senate-house, when Portia entered this high court of justice, and presented a letter from Bellario, in which that learned coun-

sellor wrote to the duke, saying he would have come himself to plead for Antonio, but that he was prevented by sickness, and he requested that the learned young doctor Balthaser (so he called Portia) might be permitted to plead in his stead. This the duke granted.

And now began this important trial. Portia looked around her, and she saw the merciless Jew; and she saw Bassanio, but he knew her not in her disguise. He was standing beside Antonio, in an agony of distress and fear for his friend.

The importance of the arduous task Portia had engaged in gave this tender lady courage, and she boldly proceeded in the duty she had undertaken to perform: and first of all she addressed herself to Shylock; and allowing that he had a right by the Venetian law to have the forfeit expressed in the bond, she spoke so sweetly of the noble quality of mercy, as would have softened any heart but the unfeeling Shylock's. Shylock only answered her by desiring to have the penalty forfeited in the bond. "Is he not able to pay the money?" asked Portia. Bassanio then offered the Jew the payment of the three thousand ducats as many times over as he should desire; which Shylock refusing, and still insisting upon having a pound of Antonio's flesh, Bassanio begged the learned young counsellor would endeavour to wrest the law a little to save Antonio's life. But Portia gravely answered, that laws once established must never be altered. Shylock hearing Portia say that the law might not be altered, it seemed to him that she was pleading in his favour, and he said, "A Daniel is come to judgment! O wise young judge, how I do honour you!"

Portia then said to Shylock, "Be merciful: take the money, and bid me tear the bond." But no mercy would the cruel Shylock show. "Why, then, Antonio," said Portia, "you must prepare your bosom for the knife. Have you anything to say?" Antonio replied, that he had but little to say, for that he had prepared his

mind for death. Then he said to Bassanio, "Give me your hand, Bassanio! Fare you well! Grieve not that I am fallen into this misfortune for you. Commend me to your honourable wife, and tell her how I have loved you!" Bassanio in the deepest affliction replied, "Antonio, I am married to a wife, who is as dear to me as life itself; but I would lose all, I would sacrifice all to this devil here, to deliver you."

Shylock now cried out impatiently, "We trifle time; I pray pronounce the sentence." And now all was awful expectation in the court, and every heart was full of grief for Antonio.

"Then," said Portia, "a pound of Antonio's flesh is thine. The law allows it, and the court awards it. And you may cut this flesh from off his breast. The law allows it and the court awards it." Shylock sharpened his long knife again, and looking eagerly on Antonio, he said, "Come, prepare!"

"Tarry a little, Jew," said Portia; "there is something else. This bond here gives you no drop of blood; the words expressly are, 'a pound of flesh.' If in the cutting off the pound of flesh you shed one drop of Christian blood, your lands and goods are by the law to be confiscated to the state of Venice." Now as it was utterly impossible for Shylock to cut off the pound of flesh without shedding some of Antonio's blood, this wise discovery of Portia's, that it was flesh and not blood that was named in the bond, saved the life of Antonio; and all admired the wonderful sagacity of the young counsellor, who had so happily thought of this expedient.

Shylock, finding himself defeated in his cruel intent, said that he would take the money, and Bassanio, rejoiced beyond measure at Antonio's unexpected deliverance, cried out, "Here is the money!" But Portia stopped him, saying, "Softly; there is no haste; the Jew shall have nothing but the penalty: therefore prepare, Shylock, to cut off the flesh; but mind you shed no

blood; nor do not cut off more nor less than just a pound." "Give me my money, and let me go," said Shylock. "I have it ready," said Bassanio; "here it is."

Shylock was going to take the money, when Portia again stopped him, saying, "Tarry, Jew; I have yet another hold upon you. By the laws of Venice, your wealth is forfeited to the state, for having conspired against the life of one of its citizens, and your life lies at the mercy of the duke; therefore, down on your knees, and ask him to pardon you."

The duke then said to Shylock, "That you may see the difference of our Christian spirit, I pardon you your life before you ask it; half your wealth belongs to Antonio, the other half comes to the state."

The generous Antonio then said that he would give up his share of Shylock's wealth, if Shylock would sign a deed to make it over at his death to his daughter and her husband; for Antonio knew that the Jew had an only daughter who had lately married against his consent a young Christian, named Lorenzo, a friend of Antonio's, which had so offended Shylock, that he had disinherited her.

The Jew agreed to this: and being thus disappointed in his revenge, and despoiled of his riches, he said, "I am ill. Let me go home; send the deed after me, and I will sign over half my riches to my daughter."—"Get thee gone, then," said the duke, "and sign it; and if you repent your cruelty and turn Christian, the state will forgive you the fine of the other half of your riches."

The duke and his senators left the court; and then Bassanio said to Portia, "Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend Antonio have by your wisdom been this day acquitted of grievous penalties, and I beg you will accept of the three thousand ducats due unto the Jew." "And we shall stand indebted to you over and above," said Antonio, "in love and service evermore."

Portia could not be prevailed upon to accept the

money; but upon Bassanio still pressing her to accept of some reward, she said, "Give me your gloves; I will wear them for your sake"; and then Bassanio, taking off his gloves, she espied the ring which she had given him upon his finger: and said, "and for your love I will take this ring from you." Bassanio replied in great confusion, that he could not give him that ring, because it was his wife's gift, and he had vowed never to part with it.

"Dear Bassanio," said Antonio, "let him have the ring; let my love and the great service he has done for me be valued against your wife's displeasure." Bassanio, ashamed to appear so ungrateful, yielded, and sent Gratiano after Portia with the ring; and then the clerk Nerissa, who had also given Gratiano a ring, she begged his ring, and Gratiano (not to be outdone in generosity by his lord) gave it to her. And there was laughing among these ladies to think, when they got home, how they would tax their husbands with giving away their rings, and swear that they had given them as a present to some woman.

And now Portia and Nerissa entered the house, and dressing themselves in their own apparel, they awaited the arrival of their husbands, who soon followed them with Antonio; and Bassanio presenting his dear friend to the lady Portia, the congratulations and welcomings of that lady were hardly over, when they perceived Nerissa and her husband quarrelling in a corner of the room. Gratiano explained, "Lady, it is about a paltry gilt ring that Nerissa gave me, with words upon it like the poetry on a cutler's knife: Love me, and leave me not."

"What does the poetry or the value of the ring signify?" said Nerissa. "You swore to me when I gave it to you, that you would keep it till the hour of death; and now you say you gave it to the lawyer's clerk. I know you gave it to a woman."—"By this hand," replied Gratiano, "I gave it to a youth, a kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy, no higher than yourself; he was clerk to the young counsellor that saved Antonio's life." Portia

said, "You were to blame, Gratiano. I gave my lord Bassanio a ring, and I am sure he would not part with it for all the world." Gratiano, now said, "My lord Bassanio gave his ring away to the counsellor, and then the boy, his clerk, that took some pains in writing, he begged my ring."

Portia, hearing this, reproached Bassanio for giving away her ring, she said, that she knew some woman had the ring. Bassanio said with great earnestness, "No, by my honour, no woman had it, but a civil doctor, who refused three thousand ducats of me, and begged the ring, which when I denied him, he went displeased away. What could I do, sweet Portia?"

Then Antonio said, "I once did lend my body for Bassanio's sake; and but for him to whom your husband gave the ring, I should have now been dead. I dare be bound again, my soul upon the forfeit, your lord will never more break his faith with you."—"Then you shall be his surety," said Portia; "give him this ring, and bid him keep it better than the other."

When Bassanio looked at this ring, he was strangely surprised to find it was the same he gave away; and then Portia told him how she was the young counsellor, and Nerissa was her clerk; and Bassanio found, to his unspeakable wonder and delight, that it was by the noble courage and wisdom of his wife that Antonio's life was saved.

And Portia again welcomed Antonio, and gave him letters which by some chance had fallen into her hands, which contained an account of his ships, that were supposed lost, being safely arrived in the harbour.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

THERE was a law in the city of Athens which gave to its citizens the power of compelling their daughters to marry whomsoever they pleased; for upon a daughter's refusing to marry the man her father had chosen to be her husband, the father was empowered by this law to cause her to be put to death; but as fathers do not often desire the death of their own daughters, this law was seldom or never put in execution.

One old man, however, whose name was Egeus, actually did come before Theseus (at that time the reigning Duke of Athens), to complain that his daughter Hermia, whom he had commanded to marry Demetrius, a young man of a noble Athenian family, refused to obey him, because she loved another young Athenian, named Lysander. Egeus demanded justice of Theseus, and desired that this cruel law might be put in force against his daughter.

Hermia pleaded in excuse for her disobedience, that Demetrius had formerly professed love for her dear friend Helena, and that Helena loved Demetrius to dis-

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It has been conjectured that "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was written to celebrate the marriage of some exalted personage in Court circles. It belongs probably to the winter of 1595. Hints of its plots and characters have been traced to a number of sources, notably to Montemazor's "Diana," where occur some incidents which perhaps suggested to Shakespeare the effects of the flower-juice laid upon the lids of the dying lover. There is some proof that it was played before Elizabeth, the passages referring to "single blessedness" and to the "fair Vestal throned by the West" being perhaps designed to please the ears of England's Virgin Queen. "'As you like it,'" says Professor Taine, "is a half dream." "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is completely one. It does not brim over in slight conversations, in supple and skipping prose; it breaks forth into long rhyming odes, dressed in magnificent metaphors, sustained by impassioned accents, such as a warm night, odorous and star-spangled, inspires in a poet who loves.

traction. But Hermia not obeying her father's command, Theseus, though a great and merciful prince, had no power to altar the laws of his country; therefore he could only give Hermia four days to consider of it: and at the end of that time, if she still refused to marry Demetrius, she was to be put to death.

When Hermia was dismissed from the presence of the duke, she went to her lover Lysander, and told him the peril she was in, and that she must either give him up and marry Demetrius, or lose her life in four days.

Lysander proposed to Hermia that she should steal out of her father's house that night, and go with him to his aunt's house which lay outside the city's boundaries, where he would marry her. "I will meet you," said Lysander, "in the wood a few miles without the city."

To this proposal Hermia joyfully agreed; and she told no one of her intended flight but her friend Helena. Helena (as maidens will do foolish things for love) very ungenerously resolved to go tell this to Demetrius, for she well knew that Demetrius would go thither in pursuit of Hermia, and intended to follow him thither.

The wood, in which Lysander and Hermia proposed to meet was the favourite haunt of those little beings known by the name of Fairies.

Oberon the king, and Titania the queen of the Fairies, with all their tiny train of followers, in this wood held their midnight revels.

Between this little king and queen of sprites there happened, at this time, a sad disagreement.

The cause of this unhappy disagreement was Titania's refusing to give Oberon a little changeling boy, whose mother had been Titania's friend; and upon her death the fairy queen stole the child from its nurse, and brought him up in the woods.

The night on which the lovers were to meet in this wood, Oberon sent for Puck, his chief favourite and privy counsellor.

Puck (or as he was sometimes called, Robin Goodfellow), was a shrewd and knavish sprite, that used to play comical pranks in the neighbouring villages.

"Come hither, Puck," said Oberon to this little merry wanderer of the night: "fetch me the flower which maids call Love-in-Idleness; the juice of that little purple flower laid on the eyelids of those who sleep, will make them, when they awake, dote on the first thing they see."

Puck ran to seek the flower; and while Oberon was waiting his return, he observed Demetrius and Helena enter the wood: he overheard Demetrius reproaching Helena for following him, and after many unkind words on his part, and gentle expostulations from Helena, reminding him of his former love and professions of true faith to her, he left her (as he said) to the mercy of the wild beasts, and she ran after him as swiftly as she could.

When Puck returned with the little purple flower, Oberon said to his favourite, "Take a part of this flower; there has been a sweet Athenian lady here, who is in love with a disdainful youth; if you find him sleeping, drop some of the love-juice in his eyes, but contrive to do it when she is near him, that the first thing he sees when he awakes may be this despised lady. You will know the man by the Athenian garments which he wears." Puck promised to manage this matter very dexterously: and then Oberon went, unperceived by Titania, to her bower.

He found Titania giving orders to her fairies, how they were to employ themselves while she slept. When the fairies had sung their queen asleep they left her to perform the important services she had enjoined them. Oberon then softly drew near his Titania, and dropped some of the love-juice on her eyelids, saying——

> "What thou seest, when thou dost wake,
> Do it for thy true-love take."

But to return to Hermia, who made her escape out of her father's house that night. When she entered the

wood, she found her dear Lysander waiting for her, to conduct her to his aunt's house; but before they had passed half through the wood, Hermia was so much fatigued, that Lysander persuaded her to rest till morning on a bank of soft moss, and lying down himself on the ground at some little distance, they soon fell fast asleep. Here they were found by Puck, who, seeing a handsome young man asleep, and perceiving that his clothes were made in the Athenian fashion, and that a pretty lady was sleeping near him, concluded that this must be the Athenian maid and her disdainful lover whom Oberon had sent him to seek; so, without more ado, he proceeded to pour some of the juice of the little purple flower into his eyes. But it so fell out, that Helena came that way, and, instead of Hermia, was the first object Lysander beheld when he opened his eyes.

Thus this misfortune happened. Helena, as has been before related, endeavoured to keep pace with Demetrius when he ran away so rudely from her; but she soon lost sight of him and as she was wandering about, dejected and forlorn, she arrived at the place where Lysander was sleeping. Gently touching him, she said, "Good sir, if you are alive, awake." Upon this Lysander opened his eyes, and immediately addressed her in terms of extravagant love and admiration. Helena, knowing Lysander was her friend Hermia's lover was in the utmost rage when she heard herself addressed in this manner; for she thought (as well she might) that Lysander was making a jest of her. "Is it not enough," said she, "that I can never get a sweet look or a kind word from Demetrius; but you, sire, must pretend in this disdainful manner to court me?" Saying these words in great anger, she ran away; and Lysander followed her, quite forgetful of his own Hermia, who was still asleep.

When Hermia awoke, she was in a sad fright at finding herself alone. In the meantime Demetrius not being able to find Hermia and his rival Lysander, and fatigued with

his fruitless search, was observed by Oberon fast asleep. Oberon had learnt by some questions he had asked of Puck, that he had applied the love-charm to the wrong person's eyes; and now having found the person first intended, he touched the eyelids of the sleeping Demetrius with the love-juice, and he instantly awoke; and the first thing he saw being Helena, he, as Lysander had done before, began to address love-speeches to her; and just at that moment Lysander, followed by Hermia, made his appearance; and then Lysander and Demetrius, both speaking together, made love to Helena.

The astonished Helena thought that Demetrius, Lysander, and her once dear friend Hermia, were all in a plot together to make a jest of her, but Hermia was as much surprised as Helena.

"Unkind Hermia," said Helena, "it is you have set Lysander on to vex me with mock praises; and your other lover Demetrius, who used almost to spurn me with his foot, have you not bid him call me Goddess, Nymph, rare, precious, and celestial?"

"I am amazed at your passionate words," said Hermia: "I scorn you not; it seems you scorn me." "Ay, do" returned Helena, "persevere, counterfeit serious looks, and make mouths at me when I turn my back; then wink at each other, and hold the sweet jest up."

While Helena and Hermia were speaking these angry words to each other, Demetrius and Lysander left them, to fight together in the wood for the love of Helena.

When they found the gentlemen had left them, they departed, and once more wandered weary in the wood in search of their lovers.

As soon as they were gone, the fairy king, who with little Puck had been listening to their quarrels, said to him, "This is your negligence, Puck; or did you do this wilfully?" "Believe me, king of shadows," answered Puck, "it was a mistake; did not you tell me I should know the man by his Athenian garments? However, I

am not sorry this has happened, for I think their jangling makes excellent sport." "You heard," said Oberon to Puck, "that Demetrius and Lysander are gone to seek a convenient place to fight in. I command you to overhang the night with a thick fog, and lead these quarrelsome lovers so astray in the dark, that they shall not be able to find each other. See you do this, till they are so weary they can go no further; and when you find they are asleep, drop the juice of this other flower into Lysander's eyes, and when he awakes he will forget his new love for Helena, and return to his old passion for Hermia. About this quickly, Puck, and I will go and see what sweet love my Titania has found."

Titania was still sleeping, and Oberon seeing a clown near her, who had lost his way in the wood, and was likewise asleep: "This fellow," said he, "shall be my Titania's true love"; and clapping an ass's head over the clown's, it seemed to fit him as well as if it had grown upon his own shoulders. Rising up, unconscious of what Oberon had done to him, he went towards the bower where the fairy queen slept.

"Ah! what angel is that I see?" said Titania, opening her eyes, and the juice of the little purple flower beginning to take effect: "are you as wise as you are beautiful?"

"Why, mistress," said the foolish clown, "if I have wit enough to find the way out of this wood, I have enough to serve my turn."

"Out of the wood do not desire to go," said the enamoured queen. "I am a spirit of no common rate. I love you. Go with me, and I will give you fairies to attend upon you. My sweet love," continued the queen, "what will you have to eat? I have a venturous fairy shall seek the squirrel's hoard, and fetch you some new nuts."

"I had rather have a handful of dried pease," said the clown, who with his ass's head had got an ass's appetite.

"But, I pray, let none of your people disturb me, for I have a mind to sleep."

When the fairy king saw the clown sleeping in the arms of his queen, he advanced within her sight, and reproached her with having lavished her favours upon an ass.

When Oberon had teased her for some time, he again demanded the changeling boy; which she, ashamed of being discovered by her lord with her new favourite, did not dare to refuse him.

Oberon then threw some of the juice of the other flower into her eyes; and the fairy queen immediately recovered her senses, and wondered at her late dotage.

Oberon likewise took the ass's head from off the clown, and left him to finish his nap with his own fool's head upon his shoulders.

Oberon and his Titania being now perfectly reconciled, found the lovers and their fair ladies, at no great distance from each other, sleeping on a grass-plot; for Puck, to make amends for his former mistake, had contrived with the utmost diligence to bring them all to the same spot, unknown to each other; and he had carefully removed the charm from off the eyes of Lysander with the antidote the fairy king gave to him.

Hermia first awoke, and finding her lost Lysander asleep so near her, was looking at him and wonderig at his strange inconstancy. Lysander presently opening his eyes, and seeing his dear Hermia, recovered his reason which the fairy charm had before clouded, and with his reason, his love for Hermia.

Helena and Demetrius were by this time awake; and a sweet sleep having quieted Helena's disturbed and angry spirits, she listened with delight to the professions of love which Demetrius still made to her, and which, to her surprise as well as pleasure, she began to perceive were sincere.

When Egeus understood that Demetrius would not

now marry his daughter, he no longer opposed her marriage with Lysander, but gave his consent that they should be wedded on the fourth day from that time, being the same day on which Hermia had been condemned to lose her life; and on that same day Helena joyfully agreed to marry her beloved and now faithful Demetrius.

The fairy king and queen, who now saw the happy ending of the lovers' history, brought about through the good offices of Oberon, received so much pleasure, that these kind spirits resolved to celebrate the approaching nuptials with sports and revels throughout their fairy kingdom.

Romeo and Juliet

The two chief families in Verona were the rich Capulets and the Montagues. There had been an old quarrel between these families, which was grown to such a height, and so deadly was the enmity between them, that it extended to the remotest kindred, to the followers and retainers of both sides.

Old lord Capulet made a great supper, to which many fair ladies and many noble guests were invited. All the admired beauties of Verona were present, and all comers were made welcome if they were not of the house of Montague. At this feast of Capulets, Rosaline, beloved of

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The precise date of "Romeo and Juliet" is not known, but we may perhaps accept the opinion of Professor Dowden that it was begun as early as 1591, and that it assumed its final form about 1597. A pirated edition of it was published in 1597, the authentic edition appearing two years later. The story is founded on an old Italian romance which Arthur Booke made popular in England in 1562 under the title of "Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet," upon which version Shakespeare probably based his play. Apart from its intrinsic beauty "Romeo and Juliet" is of deep interest when viewed as the poet's first tragedy. "It is," says Professor Dowden, "a young man's tragedy, in which youth and love were brought face to face with hatred and death."

Romeo, son to the old Lord Montague, was present; and though it was dangerous for a Montague to be seen in this assembly, yet Benvolio, a friend of Romeo, persuaded the young lord to go to this assembly in the disguise of a mask, that he might see his Rosaline, and seeing her, compare her with some choice beauties of Verona, who (he said) would make him think his swan a crow.

To this feast of Capulets then young Romeo with Benvolio and their friend Mercutio went masked. Old Capulet bid them welcome, and told them that ladies who had their toes unplagued with corns would dance with them.

And they fell to dancing, and Romeo was suddenly struck with the exceeding beauty of a lady who danced there, who seemed to him to teach the torches to burn bright, and her beauty to show by night like a rich jewel worn by a blackamoor. While he uttered these praises, he was overhead by Tybalt, a nephew of lord Capulet, who knew him by his voice to be Romeo. And he stormed and raged exceedingly, and would have struck young Romeo dead. But his uncle, the old lord Capulet, would not suffer him to do any injury at that time, both out of respect to his guests, and because all tongues in Verona bragged of Romeo to be a virtuous and well-governed youth.

The dancing being done, Romeo watched the place where the lady stood; and under favour of his masking habit, he presumed in the gentlest manner to take her by the hand, calling it a shrine which, if he profaned by touching it, he was a blushing pilgrim, and would kiss it for atonement. In such like allusions and loving conceits they were engaged, when the lady was called away to her mother. And Romeo inquiring who her mother was, discovered that the lady whose peerless beauty he was so much struck with, was young Juliet, daughter and heir to the lord Capulet. This troubled him, but it could

not dissuade him from loving. As little rest had Juliet, when she found that the gentleman that she had been talking with was Romeo and a Montague, for she had been suddenly smit with the same hasty and inconsiderate passion for Romeo which he had conceived for her.

It being midnight, Romeo with his companions departed; but they soon missed him, for, unable to stay away from the house where he had left his heart, he leaped the wall of an orchard which was at the back of Juliet's house. Here he had not been long, when Juliet appeared above at a window. She all this while thinking herself alone, fetched a deep sigh, and exclaimed, "Ah, me!" Unconscious of being overheard, and full of the new passion which that night's adventure had given birth to, she called upon her lover by name (whom she supposed absent): "O Romeo, Romeo!" said she, "wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father, and refuse thy name, for my sake; or if thou wilt not, be but my sworn love, and I no longer will be a Capulet." At this loving word Romeo could no longer refrain, but taking up the dialogue as if her words had been addressed to him personally, and not merely in fancy, he bade her call him Love, or by whatever other name she pleased, for he was no longer Romeo, if that name was displeasing to her. Juliet did not at first know who it was, that had thus stumbled upon the discovery of her secret; but when he spoke again, she immediately knew him to be young Romeo, and she expostulated with him on the danger to which he had exposed himself by climbing the orchard walls. "Alack," said Romeo, "there is more peril in your eye, than in twenty of their swords. Do you but look kind upon me, lady, and I am proof against their enmity." "How came you into this place," said Juliet, "and by whose direction?"—"Love directed me," said Romeo: "I am no pilot, yet wert thou as far apart from me, as that vast shore which is washed with the farthest sea, I should venture for such merchandise." A crimson

blush came over Juliet's face, yet unseen by Romeo by reason of the night, when she reflected upon the discovery which she had made, yet not meaning to make it, of her love to Romeo. So with an honest frankness, which the novelty of her situation excused, she confirmed the truth of what he had before heard, and addressing him by the name of fair Montague, she begged him not to impute her easy yielding to levity or an unworthy mind, but that he must lay the fault of it (if it were a fault) upon the accident of the night which had so strangely discovered her thoughts.

Romeo was beginning to call the heavens to witness that nothing was farther from his thoughts, when she stopped him, begging him not to swear; for although she joyed in him, yet she had no joy of that night's contract: it was too rash, too unadvised, too sudden. But he being urgent with her to exchange a vow of love with him that night, she said she would retract what she then bestowed, for the pleasure of giving it again, for her bounty was as infinite as the sea, and her love as deep. From this loving conference she was called away by her nurse, who slept with her, and thought it time for her to be in bed, for it was near to daybreak; but hastily returning, she said three or four words more to Romeo, the purport of which was that, if his love was indeed honourable, and his purpose marriage, she would send a messenger to him to-morrow, to appoint a time for their marriage, when she would lay all her fortunes at his feet, and follow him as her lord through the world.

The day was breaking when they parted, and Romeo, who was too full of thoughts of his mistress and that blessed meeting to allow him to sleep, instead of going home, bent his course to a monastery hard by, to find friar Lawrence. When Romeo revealed his new passion for Juliet, and requested the assistance of the friar to marry them that day, the holy man lifted up his eyes and hands in a sort of wonder at the sudden change in

Romeo's affections, for he had been privy to all Romeo's love for Rosaline, and his many complaints of her disdain. But Romeo replying, that he had often chidden him for doting on Rosaline, who could not love him again, whereas Juliet both loved and was beloved by him, the friar thinking that a matrimonial alliance between young Juliet and Romeo might happily be the means of making up the long breach between the Capulets and the Montagues, consented to join their hands in marriage.

Now was Romeo blessed indeed, and Juliet, who knew his intent from a messenger which she had despatched according to promise, did not fail to be early at the cell of friar Lawrence, where their hands were joined in holy marriage.

That same day, about noon, Romeo's friends, Benvolio and Mercutio, walking through the streets of Verona, were met by a party of the Capulets with the impetuous Tybalt at their head. This was the same angry Tybalt who would have fought with Romeo at old lord Capulet's feast. He, seeing Mercutio, accused him bluntly of associating with Romeo, a Montague. Mercutio, who had as much fire and youthful blood in him as Tybalt, replied to this accusation with some sharpness; and a quarrel was beginning when Romeo himself passing that way, the fierce Tybalt turned from Mercutio to Romeo and gave him the disgraceful appellation of villain. Romeo wished to avoid a quarrel with Tybalt above all men, because he was the kinsman of Juliet. So he tried to reason with Tybalt, whom he saluted mildly by the name of good Capulet, but Tybalt would hear no reason, but drew his weapon; and Mercutio, who knew not of Romeo's secret motive for desiring peace with Tybalt, with many disdainful words provoked Tybalt to the prosecution of his first quarrel with him; and Tybalt and Mercutio fought, till Mercutio fell. Mercutio being dead, Romeo kept his temper no longer, but returned

the scornful appellation of villain which Tybalt had given him; and they fought till Tybalt was slain by Romeo. This deadly broil falling out in the midst of Verona at noonday, the news of it quickly brought a crowd of citizens to the spot, and among them the old lords Capulet and Montague, with their wives; and soon after arrived the prince himself, who being related to Mercutio, whom Tybalt had slain, and having had the peace of his government often disturbed by these brawls of Montagues and Capulets, came determined to put the law in strictest force against those who should be found to be the offenders. Unmoved by the passionate exclamations of women, on a careful examination of the facts, he pronounced his sentence, and by that sentence Romeo was banished from Verona.

When the tidings reached Juliet she at first gave way to rage against Romeo, who had slain her dear cousin; but in the end love got the mastery, and the tears which she shed for grief that Romeo had slain her cousin turned to drops of joy that her husband lived whom Tybalt would have slain. Then came fresh tears, and they were altogether of grief for Romeo's banishment.

Romeo, after the fray, had taken refuge in friar Lawrence's cell, where he was first made acquainted with the prince's sentence, which seemed to him far more terrible than death. Heaven was there were Juliet lived, and all beyond was purgatory, torture, hell. The good friar would have applied the consolation of philosophy to his griefs: but this frantic young man would hear of none, but like a madman he tore his hair, and threw himself all along upon the ground, as he said, to take the measure of his grave. From this unseemly state he was roused by a message from his dear lady, which a little revived him; and then the friar took the advantage to expostulate with him on the unmanly weakness which he had shown. Then when Romeo was a little calmed, he counselled him that he should go that night and se-

cretly take his leave of Juliet, and thence proceed straightways to Mantua, at which place he should sojourn till the friar found fit occasion to publish his marriage, which might be a joyful means of reconciling their families.

That night Romeo passed with his dear wife, gaining secret admission to her chamber from the orchard in which he had heard her confession of love the night before. That had been a night of unmixed joy and rapture; but the pleasures of this night, and the delight which the lovers took in each other's society, were sadly allayed with the prospect of parting, and the fatal adventures of the past day. Romeo took his leave of his dear wife with a heavy heart, promising to write to her from Mantua every hour in the day; and when he had descended from her chamber-window, as he stood below her on the ground, in that sad foreboding state of mind in which she was, he appeared to her eyes as one dead in the bottom of a tomb.

Romeo had not been gone many days, before old lord Capulet proposed a match for Juliet. The husband he had chosen for her was count Paris, a gallant, young, and noble gentleman.

The terrified Juliet was in a sad perplexity at her father's offer. She pleaded her youth unsuitable to marriage, the recent death of Tybalt. But lord Capulet was deaf to all her excuses, and in a peremptory manner ordered her to get ready, for by the following Thursday she should be married to Paris.

In this extremity Juliet applied to the friendly friar, and he asking her if she had resolution to undertake a desperate remedy, and she answering that she would go into the grave alive rather than marry Paris, he directed her to go home, and give her consent to marry Paris, according to her father's desire, and on the next night, which was the night before the marriage, to drink the contents of a phial which he then gave her, the effect of

which would be that for two-and-forty hours after drinking it she should appear cold and lifeless; and when the bridegroom came to fetch her in the morning, he would find her to appearance dead; that then she would be borne, as the manner in that country was, uncovered on a bier, to be buried in the family vault; that if she could consent to this terrible trial, in forty-two hours after swallowing the liquid she would be sure to awake, as from a dream; and before she should awake, he would let her husband know their drift, and he should come in the night and bear her thence to Mantua.

On the Wednesday night, Juliet drank of the potion. She had many misgivings lest she should awake before the time that Romeo was to come for her: whether the terror of the place, a vault full of dead Capulets' bones, and where Tybalt, all bloody, lay festering in his shroud, would not be enough to drive her distracted. But then her love for Romeo, and her aversion for Paris returned, and she desperately swallowed the draught, and became insensible.

When young Paris came early in the morning with music to awaken his bride, instead of a living Juliet, her chamber presented the dreary spectacle of a lifeless corpse. What death to his hopes! What confusion then reigned through the whole house! Now, instead of a priest to marry Juliet, a priest was needed to bury her; and she was borne to church indeed, not to augment the cheerful hopes of the living, but to swell the dreary numbers of the dead.

Bad news, which always travels faster than good, now brought the dismal story of his Juliet's death to Romeo at Mantua, before the messenger could arrive who was sent from friar Lawrence to apprise him that these were mock funerals only.

Hearing that his lady was dead, Romeo ordered horses to be got ready, for he determined that night to visit Verona, and to see her in her tomb. And as mischief

is swift to enter into the thoughts of desperate men, he called to mind a poor apothecary, whose shop in Mantua he had lately passed, and from the beggarly appearance of the man, he had said at the time, "If a man were to need poison, which by the law of Mantua it is death to sell, here lives a poor wretch who would sell it him." These words of his now came into his mind, and he sought out the apothecary, who sold him a poison which, if he swallowed, he told him, if he had the strength of twenty men, would quickly despatch him.

With this poison he set out for Verona, to have a sight of his dear lady in her tomb, meaning, when he had satisfied his sight, to swallow the poison, and be buried by her side. He reached Verona at midnight, and found the churchyard in the midst of which was situated the ancient tomb of the Capulets. He was proceeding to break open the monument, when he was interrupted by a voice, which by the name of vile Montague, bade him desist from his unlawful business. It was the young count Paris.

Romeo urged Paris to leave him; but the count laid hands on him as a felon, which Romeo resisting, they fought, and Paris fell. When Romeo, by the help of a light, came to see who it was that he had slain, that it was Paris, who (he learned in his way from Mantua) should have married Juliet, he took the dead youth by the hand, as one whom misfortune had made a companion, and said that he would bury him in a triumphal grave, meaning in Juliet's grave, which he now opened: and there lay his lady, as one whom death had no power upon to change a feature or complexion, in her matchless beauty. Here Romeo took his last leave of his lady's lips, kissing them; and here he shook the burden of his cross stars from his weary body, swallowing that poison which the apothecary had sold him, whose operation was fatal and real, not like that dissembling potion which Juliet had swallowed.

And now the hour was arrived at which the friar had promised that Juliet should awake; and he, having learned that his letters which he had sent to Mantua, by some unlucky detention of the messenger, had never reached Romeo, came himself, provided with a pickaxe and lantern, to deliver the lady from her confinement; but he was surprised to find a light already burning in the Capulets' monument, and to see swords and blood near it, and Romeo and Paris lying by the monument.

Before he could entertain a conjecture, to imagine how these fatal accidents had fallen out, Juliet awoke out of her trance, and seeing the friar near her, she remembered the place where she was, and the occasion of her being there, and asked for Romeo, but the friar, hearing a noise, bade her come out of that place of death, and of unnatural sleep, for a greater power than they could contradict had thwarted their intents; and being frightened by the noise of people coming, he fled; but when Juliet saw the cup closed in her true love's hands, she guessed that poison had been the cause of his end, and quickly unsheathing a dagger which she wore, and stabbing herself, died by her true Romeo's side.

The watch by this time had come up to the place. A page belonging to count Paris, who had witnessed the fight between his master and Romeo, had given the alarm, which had spread among the citizens, who went up and down the streets of Verona confusedly exclaiming, A Paris! a Romeo! a Juliet! as the rumour had imperfectly reached them, till the uproar brought lord Montague and lord Capulet out of their beds, with the prince, to inquire into the causes of the disturbance. A great multitude being assembled at the Capulets' monument, the friar was demanded by the prince to deliver what he knew of these strange and disastrous accidents.

And there, in the presence of the old lords Montague and Capulets, he faithfully related the story of their children's fatal love, and the part he took in promoting their

marriage, in the hope in that union to end the long quarrels between their families.

And the prince, turning to these old lords, Montague and Capulet, rebuked them for their brutal and irrational enmities, and showed them what a scourge Heaven had laid upon such offences, that it had found means even through the love of their children to punish their unnatural hate. And these old rivals, no longer enemies, agreed to bury their long strife in their children's graves.

So did these poor old lords, when it was too late, strive to outgo each other in mutual courtesies: while so deadly had been their rage and enmity in past times, that nothing but the fearful overthrow of their children (poor sacrifices to their quarrels and dissensions) could remove the rooted hates and jealousies of the noble families.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

The Revolt of Islam

Canto I

1 The starlight smile of children, the sweet looks
Of women, the fair breast from which I fed,
The murmur of the unreposing brooks,
And the green light which, shifting overhead,
Some tangled bower of vines around me shed,
The shells on the sea-sand, and the wild flowers,
The lamplight through the rafters clearly spread,
And on the turning flax—in life's young hours
These sights and sounds did nurse my spirit's folded powers.

2 In Argolis, beside the echoing sea,
Such impulses within my mortal frame
Arose, and they were dear to memory,
Like tokens of the dead:—but others came

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born on August 4, 1792, and was educated at Eton and at Oxford. In 1811 he made a runaway match with Harriet Westbrook, the daughter of a retired innkeeper, and this marriage led to an estrangement with his father, Sir Timothy Shelley, Bart., which proved to be final. Two years later he left his wife, and upon her death, in 1816, married Mary Godwin (see Vol. VIII, p. 41), with whom two years after he went to live in Italy, partly for the sake of being nearer to his friend Byron. On July 8, 1823, he perished in a sudden squall as he was returning with a friend, in a small sailing boat which they owned together, from a visit to Leghorn, and his body being washed ashore was ceremoniously cremated in the place where it was found in the presence of Leigh Hunt, the poet and essayist, Trelawney, and Lord Byron, and his ashes deposited in the Protestant Cemetery at Rome beside the grave of the poet Keats. An object of ridicule and suspicion in his own lifetime, no poet has gained more in general admiration since his death than

Soon, in another shape: the wondrous fame
Of the past world, the vital words and deeds
Of minds whom neither time nor change can tame,
Traditions dark and old, where evil creeds
Start forth, and whose dim shade a stream of poison feeds.

3 The land in which I lived, by a fell bane
Was withered up. Tyrants dwelt side by side,
And stabled in our homes—until the chain
Stifled the captive's cry, and to abide
That blasting curse men had no shame—all vied
In evil, slave and despot; fear with lust
Strange fellowship through mutual hate had tied,
Like two dark serpents tangled in the dust,
Which on the paths of men their mingling poison thrust.

4 Earth, our bright home, its mountains and its waters,
And the ethereal shapes which are suspended
Over its green expanse, and those fair daughters,
The clouds, of Sun and Ocean, who have blended
The colours of the air since first extended
It cradled the young world, none wandered forth
To see or feel: a darkness had descended
On every heart: the light which shows its worth,
Must among gentle thoughts and fearless take its birth.

Shelley. To the attested beauty of his person he added an ardour of intellect which merged itself, on the one hand, in the spiritual passion and lyrical outpouring of his verse, and on the other in those warmly revolutionary doctrines with which his name is equally associated; and for these qualities he has come to be regarded, not only as in some measure the prophet of a new era, but also as perhaps the most idealistic of all the poets. The "Revolt of Islam" (1817) belongs, with "Queen Mab" and "Prometheus Unbound," to those longer poems in which he is concerned with the perfectibility of mankind in its social relations. It should be added, that the numbering of the cantos as here given is not the same as in the complete poem.

5 For they all pined in bondage; body and soul,
Tyrant and slave, victim and torturer, bent
Before one Power, to which supreme control
Over their will by their own weakness lent,
Made all its many names omnipotent;
All symbols of things evil, all divine;
And hymns of blood or mockery, which rent
The air from all its fanes, did intertwine
Imposture's impious toils round each discordant shrine.

6 I heard, as all have heard, life's various story,
And in no careless heart transcribed the tale;
But, from the sneers of men who had grown hoary
In shame and scorn, from groans of crowds made pale
By famine, from a mother's desolate wail
O'er her polluted child, from innocent blood
Poured on the earth, and brows anxious and pale
With the heart's warfare, did I gather food
To feed my many thoughts: a tameless multitude.

7 It must be so—I will arise and waken
The multitude, and like a sulphurous hill,
Which on a sudden from its snows has shaken
The swoon of ages, it shall burst and fill
The world with cleansing fire; it must, it will—
It may not be restrained!—and who shall stand
'Amid the rocking earthquake steadfast still,
But Laon? on high Freedom's desert land
A tower whose marble walls the leagued storms shall stand!

8 One summer night, in commune with the hope
Thus deeply fed, amid some ruins gray
I watched, beneath the dark sky's starry cope;
And ever from that hour upon me lay
The burden of this hope, and night or day,

In vision or in dream, clove to my breast:
Among mankind, or when gone far away
To the lone shores and mountains, 'twas a guest
Which followed where I fled, and watched when I did rest.

9 An orphan with my parents lived, whose eyes
Were lodestars of delight, which drew me home
When I might wander forth; nor did I prize
Aught human thing beneath Heaven's mighty dome
Beyond this child: so when sad hours were come,
And baffled hope like ice still clung to me,
Since kin were cold, and friends had now become
Heartless and false, I turned from all, to be,
Cythna, the only source of tears and smiles to thee.

10 What wert thou then? A child most infantine,
Yet wandering far beyond that innocent age
In all but its sweet looks and mien divine:
Even then, methought, with the world's tyrant rage
A patient warfare thy young heart did wage,
When those soft eyes of scarcely conscious thought
Some tale, or thine own fancies, would engage
To overflow with tears, or converse fraught
With passion, o'er their depths its fleeting light had wrought.

11 She moved upon this earth a shape of brightness,
A power, that from its objects scarcely drew
One impulse of her being—in her lightness
Most like some radiant cloud of morning dew,
Which wander through the waste air's pathless blue,
To nourish some far desert: she did seem
Beside me, gathering beauty as she grew,
Like the bright shade of some immortal dream
Which walks, when tempest sleeps, the wave of life's dark stream.

Canto II

But Laon and Cythna had only just agreed to preach the gospel of liberty and to rouse the people, the one in countries adjacent, the other in the Golden City itself, when the tyrant, in a murderous frenzy which led him to butcher the citizens and to burn their homes, carried off Cythna to make her a member of his harem, and imprisoned Laon without food on the platform of a mighty column which overlooked the sea. On the fourth day of his imprisonment, when Laon was going mad, he was released by an old hermit, who, conveying him to his abode on the margin of a lake, nursed him back to life. Laon was then told how the old man's powerful eloquence had melted the hearts of the keepers of the prison, how in the Golden City a beautiful maiden had arisen whose speeches had roused the people to assert their liberty, and how the patriots were now keeping night and day a strict blockade around the desperate bands of mercenaries who still maintained the cause and palace of the tyrant.

Stirred by this news, and urged on by the hermit, who hailed the young enthusiast as the inspired prophet of liberty, Laon travelled back to the Golden City, where, despite the fact that the tyrant's guards had just slain ten thousand of the patriots in their sleep, these same murderers were quickly persuaded by his appeals to join the popular party and to desert their master. Great rejoicings then took place in celebration of this auspicious event; Laon and Cythna—for she it was who was the beautiful and inspired maiden—were publicly acclaimed as the saviours of the nation, and a great altar of the Federation was erected to commemorate their victory. But the tyrant, whose life had been spared, was not yet at the end of his resources. In the midst of these demonstrations of joy and happiness he called in the aid of foreign powers, and taking the patriots by surprise, crushed them and put them to the sword. Laon fought desperately till the end, and was just on the point of receiving his death-blow when Cythna, mounted on a gigantic horse, swept down upon his foes, rescued him, and bore him away to a ruined tower which overhung the ocean. There they celebrated their nuptial rites, and Cythna related how after passing some time in the tyrant's harem she was confined in a cage, where, in the intervals of madness, she bore a daughter who was taken from her, and how, after a long time had passed, she was delivered from her captivity by an earthquake, which cracked the cage and enabled her to sail back to the Golden City and there to accomplish the work of liberation. She was not despondent over the ruin of her hopes: on the contrary, she was confident that they had sown the seeds of ultimate victory for the cause of Liberty.

1 "Virtue, and hope, and love, like light and Heaven,
Surround the world. We are their chosen slaves.
Has not the whirlwind of our spirit driven
Truth's deathless germs to thought's remotest caves?
Lo, winter comes!—the grief of many graves,
The frost of death, the tempest of the sword,
The flood of tyranny, whose sanguine waves
Stagnate like ice at superstition's word,
And bind all human hearts in its repose abhorred.

2 "This is the winter of the world; and here
We die, even as the winds of autumn fade,
Expiring in the frore and foggy air.
Behold! spring comes, though we must pass—who made
The promise of its birth—even as the shade
Which from our death, as from a mountain, flings
The future, a broad sunrise; thus arrayed,
As with the plumes of overshadowing wings,
From its dark gulf of change, Earth like an eagle springs.

3 "O dearest love! we shall be dead and cold
Before this morn may on the world arise;
Wouldst thou the glory of its dawn behold?
Alas! gaze not on me, but turn thine eyes
On thine own heart—it is a paradise
Which everlasting Spring has made its own,
And while drear winter fills the naked skies,
Sweet streams of sunny thought, and flowers fresh-blown,
Are there, and weave their sounds and odours into one.

4 "In their own hearts the earnest of the hope
Which made them great, the good will ever find;
And though some envious shades may interlope
Between the effect and it, One comes behind

Who aye the future to the past will bind—
Necessity, whose sightless strength for ever
Evil with evil, good with good, must wind
In bonds of union, which no power may sever:
They must bring forth their kind and be divided never!

5 "The good and mighty of departed ages
Are in their graves, the innocent and free,
Heroes, and Poets, and prevailing Sages,
Who leave the vesture of their majesty
To adorn and clothe this naked world;—and we
Are like to them—such perish, but they leave
All hope, or love, or truth, or liberty,
Whose forms their mighty spirits could conceive,
To be a rule and law to ages that survive.

6 "So be the turf heaped over our remains
Even in our happy youth, and that strange lot,
Whate'er it be, when in these mingling veins
The blood is still, be ours; then let sense and thought
Pass from our being, or be numbered not
Among the things that are; let those who come
Behind, for whom our steadfast will has bought
A calm inheritance, a glorious doom,
Insult with careless tread our undivided tomb.

7 "Our many thoughts and deeds, our life and love,
Our happiness, and all that we have been,
Immortally must live, and burn, and move,
When we shall be no more;—the world has seen
A type of peace; and—as some most serene
And lovely spot to a poor maniac's eye,
After long years, some sweet and moving scene
Of youthful hope, returning suddenly,
Quells his long madness—thus shall man remember thee.

8 "And Calumny meanwhile shall feed on us,
And worms devour the dead, and near the throne,
And at the altar, most accepted thus
Shall sneers and curses be;—what we have done
None shall dare vouch, though it be truly known;
That record shall remain, when they must pass
Who built their pride on its oblivion;
And fame, in human hope which sculptured was,
Survive the perished scroll of unenduring brass."

Canto III

Meantime, the tyrant in his lust for blood allied himself with all the kings of the earth, pagan and Christian, for the purpose of slaying his people. Millions of foreign soldiers came over and made the country a shambles, and those who were not put to the sword were devoted to the wheel, the fire, the pincers, the hook, and the scorpions. Five days the slaughter lasted, and on the seventh day there was peace

1 Peace in the desert, fields, and villages,
Between the glutted beasts and mangled dead!
Peace in the silent streets! save where the cries
Of victims to their fiery judgment led,
Made pale their voiceless lips who seemed to dread
Even in their dearest kindred lest some tongue
Be faithless to the fear yet unbetrayed;
Peace in the tyrant palace, where the throng
Wastes the triumphal hours in festival and song.

2 Day after day the burning sun rolled on
Over the death-polluted land—it came
Out of the East like fire, and fiercely shone
A lamp of Autumn, ripening with its flame
The few lone ears of corn;—the sky became
Stagnate with heat, so that each cloud and blast
Languished and died,—the thirsty air did claim
All moisture, and a rotting vapour passed
From the unburied dead, invisible and fast.

3 First Want, then Plague, came on the beasts; their food
Failed, and they drew the breath of its decay.
Millions on millions, whom the scent of blood
Had lured, or who, from regions far away,
Had tracked the hosts in festival array
From their dark deserts, gaunt and wasting now,
Stalked like fell shades among their perished prey;
In their green eyes a strange disease did grow,
They sank in hideous spasms, or pains severe and slow.

4 The fish were poisoned in the streams, the birds
In the green woods perished; the insect race
Was withered up; the scattered flocks and herds
Who had survived the wild beast's hungry chase
Died moaning, each upon the other's face
In helpless agony gazing; round the city,
All night, the lean hyænas their sad case
Like starving infants wailed; a woeful ditty!
And many a mother wept, pierced with unnatural pity.

5 There was no food, the corn was trampled down,
The flocks and herds had perished; on the shore
The dead and putrid fish were ever thrown;
The deeps were foodless, and the winds no more
Creaked with the weight of birds, but, as before
Those wingèd things sprang forth, were void of shade;
The vines and orchards, Autumn's golden store,
Were burned;—so that the meanest food was weighed
With gold, and avarice died before the god it made.

6 There was no corn—in the wide market-place
All loathliest things, even human flesh, was sold;
They weighed it in small scales, and many a face
Was fixed in eager horror then: his gold

The miser brought; the tender maid, grown bold,
Through hunger, bared her scorned charms in vain;
The mother brought her eldest-born, controlled
By instinct blind as love, but turned again
And bade her infant suck, and died in silent pain.

7 Then fell blue plague upon the race of man,
"O, for the sheathed steel, so late which gave
Oblivion to the dead, when the streets ran
With brother's blood! O, that the earthquake's grave
Would gape, or ocean lift its stifling wave!"
Vain cries—throughout the streets, thousands pursued
Each by his fiery torture howl and rave,
Or sit, in frenzy's unimagined mood,
Upon fresh heaps of dead; a ghastly multitude.

8 It was not hunger now, but thirst. Each well
Was choked with rotting corpses and became
A cauldron of green mist made visible
At sunrise. Thither still the myriads came,
Seeking to quench the agony of the flame
Which raged like poison through their bursting veins;
Naked they were from torture, without shame,
Spotted with nameless scars and lurid blains,
Childhood, and youth, and age, writhing in savage pains.

9 It was not thirst, but madness! Many saw
Their own lean image everywhere; it went
A ghastlier self beside them, till the awe
Of that dread sight to self-destruction sent
Those shrieking victims; some, ere life was spent,
Sought with a horrid sympathy to shed
Contagion on the sound; and others rent

Their matted hair and cried aloud, "We tread
On fire! The avenging Power his hell on earth has spread."

10 Sometimes the living by the dead were hid.
Near the great fountain in the public square,
Where corpses made a crumbling pyramid
Under the sun, was heard one stifled prayer
For life, in the hot silence of the air;
And strange 'twas, 'mid that hideous heap to see
Some shrouded in their long golden hair,
As if not dead, but slumbering quietly,
Like forms which sculptors carve, then love to agony.

11 Famine had spared the palace of the king:—
He rioted in festival awhile,
He and his guards and priests, but Plague did fling
One shadow upon all. Famine can smile
On him who brings it food, and pass, with guile
Of thankful falsehood, like a courtier gay,
The house-dog of the throne; but many a mile
Comes Plague a wingèd wolf, who loathes alway
The garbage and the scum that strangers make her prey.

12 So, near the throne, amid the gorgeous feast,
Sheathed in resplendent arms, or loosely dight
To luxury, ere the mockery yet had ceased
That lingered on his lips, the warrior's might
Was loosened, and a new and ghastlier night
In dreams of frenzy lapped his eyes; he fell
Headlong, or with stiff eyeballs sat upright
Among the guests, or raving mad, did tell
Strange truth; a dying seer of dark oppression's hell.

13 The Princes, and the Priests, were pale with terror;
That monstrous faith wherewith they ruled mankind,
Fell, like a shaft loosed by the bowman's error,

On their own hearts: they sought and they could find
No refuge—'twas the blind who led the blind!
So, through the desolate streets to the high fane,
The many-tongued and endless armies wind
In sad procession: each among the train
To his own idol lifts his supplications vain.

At this point an Iberian priest, the most fanatical of his tribe, proposed that, to appease the wrath of the gods whom they all worshipped—though under varying forms—Laon and Cythna should be offered to him as a burnt offering. Laon, however, anticipating this proposal, surrendered himself on condition that Cythna should be allowed to go to America, the land of the free. This condition the Tyrant and the priests swore by a most solemn oath to fulfill, but, Cythna, too, surrendering herself, the oath was broken, and the two champions of liberty were burnt alive on an enormous bier, only to pass by this brief and fiery ordeal into a happier and more beautiful world.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

The School for Scandal

Persons in the Play

Sir Peter Teazle
Sir Oliver Surface
Sir Benjamin Backbite
Charles Surface } *Nephews to Sir Oliver Surface*
Joseph Surface }
Snake, *in the pay of Lady Sneerwell*
Moses, *a Jewish moneylender*
Lady Teazle
Lady Sneerwell
Mrs. Candour
Maria, *ward to Sir Peter*

The scene is laid in London.

Introductory

Sir Peter Teazle, an old bachelor of fifty, has married a young wife, the daughter of a country squire, and seven months after marriage finds several reasons to regret his temerity; for Lady Teazle has become in every respect the equal of any town-bred woman of fashion. She is as accomplished a scandal-monger and gossiper as Sir

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Richard Brinsley Sheridan was born at Dublin in September, 1751. He gave no promise as a boy of the brilliance he afterwards displayed as a man, and he does not seem to have been brought up to any regular employment. In 1773 he eloped with a Miss Linley, a public singer of great beauty and accomplishment, and at that time, as a means of livelihood, he betook himself to literature. In 1775 his first comedy, "The Rivals," was produced, and in 1777 "The School for Scandal." This later work, his greatest, leaped into an instant popularity which it has

Benjamin Backbite, Mrs. Candour, or Lady Sneerwell. She will never lose her temper when her husband reproaches her. Moreover, Sir Peter suspects her of a growing attachment to Charles Surface, a careless young scapegrace and rake, to whom the worthy knight has acted in the capacity of guardian. As a matter of fact, Charles is really attached to Maria, Sir Peter's young ward, and it is Joseph, the model young man, the utterer of noble sentiments, to whom Lady Teazle has been lending a too willing ear; though Joseph, it must be admitted, at the early stage of the acquaintance, only courted the wife in order to further his suit to the ward, for whose money he has a very sincere affection. Sir Peter looks kindly on Joseph's passion for the young lady, but she herself detests Joseph, and loves and pities Charles.

Matters being in this train, Sir Oliver Surface, a rich nabob, who has sent both his orphan nephews large sums from India, returns to London, and is told what a wicked prodigal Charles is, and what a worthy young man Joseph must be considered. But he has his doubts about either young gentleman's reputation, and in order to test Charles he readily falls in with a suggestion of Sir Peter's that, being personally unknown to both his nephews, he should go round to Charles's house in the company of Moses, a Jewish moneylender, and there pose as one Premium, a broker who is prepared to lend the young spendthrift money at an exorbitant rate of interest. Sir Oliver accordingly visits Charles in this character, with the result that he buys for a song the whole of the Surface family portraits, save a picture of himself, which the grateful Charles resolutely refuses to sell on any terms whatever. On the whole, Sir Oliver is pretty well satisfied with the interview.

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ever since retained. His comedies are witty and sprightly, and in fact, reveal the nature of the dramatist himself. Always the most reckless and improvident of mortals, Sheridan in his later years was engaged in a vain struggle with debt, dissipation, and failing health. He died in London on July 7, 1816.

Meantime, a clandestine visit which Lady Teazle pays to Joseph's library is the means of placing the man of sentiment in a situation of considerable embarrassment. Lady Teazle has called partly in a spirit of adventure, partly to complain to Joseph of Sir Peter's unfounded jealousy of Charles.

LADY TEAZLE: I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don't you, Mr. Surface?

JOSEPH SURFACE (*aside*): Indeed I do not— (*Aloud*) Oh, certainly I do! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

LADY TEAZLE: Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking to have the most ill-natured things said of one, without any foundation?

JOSEPH SURFACE: There's the mortification indeed; for when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

LADY TEAZLE: Then, Sir Peter, too—to have him so peevish and suspicious!

JOSEPH SURFACE: But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

LADY TEAZLE: Indeed! So that if he suspects me without cause, it follows that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Undoubtedly; for your husband should never be deceived in you, and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

LADY TEAZLE: What you say is very reasonable, and when the consciousness of my innocence——

JOSEPH SURFACE: Oh, my dear madam, there is the great mistake! 'Tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes

you negligent of forms and careless of the world's opinion? Why, the consciousness of your own innocence.

LADY TEAZLE: 'Tis very true!

JOSEPH SURFACE: Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas,* you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

LADY TEAZLE: Do you think so?

JOSEPH SURFACE: I am sure on't. Your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

LADY TEAZLE: Your prescription, then, is that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

LADY TEAZLE: Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

JOSEPH SURFACE: An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

LADY TEAZLE: Why, if my understanding were once convinced——

JOSEPH SURFACE: Yes, yes—Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no; I have too much honour to desire it.

LADY TEAZLE: Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument? (*Rises.*)

JOSEPH SURFACE: Then, by this hand, which—(*taking her hand*) (*Re-enter servant*)—'sdeath, you blockhead! what do you want?

SERVANT: I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Sir Peter!—Oons—the devil!

LADY TEAZLE: Sir Peter! I am quite undone! Now, Mr. Logic! Oh! mercy, sir, he is on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I am so imprudent again—(*Goes behind the screen.*)

JOSEPH SURFACE: Give me that book. (*Sits down. Servant pretends to adjust his chair.*)

[*Enter* SIR PETER TEAZLE.

SIR PETER: Ay, ever improving himself—Mr. Surface—(*pats Joseph on the shoulder.*)

JOSEPH SURFACE: Oh, my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon. (*Gaping, throws away the book.*) I have been dozing over a stupid book. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only thing I am a coxcomb in.

SIR PETER: 'Tis very neat indeed; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge—hung, I perceive, with maps.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Oh, yes, I find great use in that screen.

SIR PETER: I daresay you must when you want to find anything in a hurry.

JOSEPH SURFACE (*aside*): Ay, or to hide anything in a hurry, either. (*To servant*): You need not stay.

SERVANT: No, sir. [*Exit.*

JOSEPH SURFACE: Here's a chair, Sir Peter.

SIR PETER: Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you. 'Tis but too plain that Lady Teazle has not the least regard for me; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another. Have you no guess who I mean?

JOSEPH SURFACE: I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite!

SIR PETER: Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

JOSEPH SURFACE: My brother! Impossible!

SIR PETER: Oh, my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart deceives you. You judge of others by yourself.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

SIR PETER: True; but your brother has no sentiment —you never hear him talk so.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

SIR PETER: Ay, but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, likely young fellow?

JOSEPH SURFACE: That's very true.

SIR PETER: But then, again—that the nephew of my old friend Sir Oliver should be the person to attempt such a wrong hurts me more nearly.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Ay, there's the point. When ingratitude barbs the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

SIR PETER: Ay, I that was, in a manner, left his guardian; in whose house he has been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him—my advice!

JOSEPH SURFACE: If it should be proved on him, he's no longer a brother of mine; for the man who can break the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as a pest to society.

SIR PETER: What a difference there is between you! What noble sentiments!

JOSEPH SURFACE: Yet I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

SIR PETER: I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds which I wish to have your opinion on. By one, she will enjoy £800 a year independent while I live; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune at my death.

JOSEPH SURFACE: This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous. (*Aside*): I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

SIR PETER: And now we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

JOSEPH SURFACE (*softly*): I beg you will not men-

tion it. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate? (*Aside*): 'Sdeath, I shall be ruined every way!

SIR PETER: And though you are averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your position, I am sure she is not your enemy in the affair.

JOSEPH SURFACE: I am too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never—(*Re-enter servant.*) Well, sir?

SERVANT: Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

JOSEPH SURFACE: 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within—I'm out for the day.

SIR PETER: Stay—a thought has struck me: you shall be at home.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Well, well, let him up. (*Exit servant.*) (*Aside*): He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however.

SIR PETER: Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere; then do you tax him on the point we have been talking of. If he is innocent, as you tell me you are sure he is, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest (*going up to the screen*). Here behind the screen will be—hey! there seems to be one listener here already—I'll swear I saw a petticoat!

JOSEPH SURFACE: Hah! hah! hah! this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph either. 'Tis a little French milliner, a silly rogue, that plagues me.

SIR PETER: Ah, Joseph! Did I ever think that you—but, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife!

JOSEPH SURFACE: Oh, 'twill never go any further.

SIR PETER: Then, faith, let her hear it out—here's a closet will do as well—sly rogue! sly rogue! (*goes into the closet*). [*Enter* CHARLES SURFACE.

CHARLES SURFACE: Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

JOSEPH SURFACE: Neither, brother, I assure you.

CHARLES SURFACE: But what has made Sir Peter steal off? Was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

JOSEPH SURFACE: No, sir; but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

CHARLES SURFACE: How so, pray?

JOSEPH SURFACE: He thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

CHARLES SURFACE: Who, I? Lud! not I, upon my word. Hah! hah! hah! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?

JOSEPH SURFACE: This is no subject to jest on, brother.

CHARLES SURFACE: True; then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear it. (*Raising his voice.*)

CHARLES SURFACE: Besides, you know my attachment to Maria. But do you know you surprise me exceedingly by naming me with Lady Teazle; for, i' faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

JOSEPH SURFACE: Oh, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

CHARLES SURFACE: Egad, I am serious. Don't you remember one day when I called and found you together?

JOSEPH SURFACE (*aside*): Gad, I must stop him! Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying. I knew

you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

CHARLES SURFACE: How! Sir Peter? Where is he?

JOSEPH SURFACE: Softly, there! (*points to the closet*).

CHARLES SURFACE: Oh, 'fore heaven, I'll have him out.

JOSEPH SURFACE: No, no——

CHARLES SURFACE: I say, Sir Peter, come into court. (*Pulls in* SIR PETER.) What! my old guardian!—What! inquisitor and take evidence incog.? Oh, fie! oh, fie!

SIR PETER: Give me your hand, Charles—I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph—'twas my plan!

CHARLES SURFACE: Indeed!

SIR PETER: What I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

CHARLES SURFACE: Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more. Wasn't it, Joseph?

SIR PETER: Oh! you would have retorted on him.

CHARLES SURFACE: Oh! ay, that was a joke.

[*Re-enter* SERVANT, *who whispers to* JOSEPH *that* LADY SNEERWELL *is below.* JOSEPH *leaves the room to send her away, bidding* SIR PETER *say not a word to* CHARLES *about the little French milliner.*

SIR PETER: Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

CHARLES SURFACE: Psha! he is too moral by half. He would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

SIR PETER: Come, come, you wrong him. Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint, neither. (*Aside*): I have a great mind to tell him.

CHARLES SURFACE: Oh, hang him! He's a very anchorite, a young hermit!

SIR PETER: You must not abuse him: he may chance to hear of it again.

CHARLES SURFACE: Why, you won't tell him?

SIR PETER: No—hark-'ee—have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph?

CHARLES SURFACE: I should like it of all things.

SIR PETER: Then, i' faith, we will. I'll be quit with him for discovering me. (*Whispers*): He had a girl with him when I called.

CHARLES SURFACE: What! Joseph? You jest.

SIR PETER: A little French milliner—and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

CHARLES SURFACE: The devil she is!

SIR PETER: Hush! I tell you (*points to the screen*).

CHARLES SURFACE: Behind the screen! 'Slife, let's unveil her!

SIR PETER: No, no, he's coming: you shan't indeed!

CHARLES SURFACE: Oh, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner.

SIR PETER: Not for the world!—Joseph will never forgive me.

CHARLES SURFACE: I'll stand by you.

SIR PETER: Odds, here he is! (CHARLES *throws down the screen.*) [*Re-enter* JOSEPH SURFACE.

CHARLES SURFACE: Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful!

SIR PETER: Lady Teazle, by all that's damnable!

CHARLES SURFACE: Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret. Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me? Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What! is Morality dumb too?—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now! All mute!—Well—though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another; so I'll leave you to yourselves. (*Going*): Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness! Sir

Peter, there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment. [*Exit.*

Despite this contretemps, Joseph insists on protesting his innocence, and tells a cock-and-bull story which explains nothing, and which Lady Teazle is so far from corroborating that she reveals to Sir Peter the whole truth about the matter. Unfortunately for the man of sentiment, another interview which he has in the library with a visitor helps still further to disclose his real character. Sir Oliver—by arrangement with Sir Peter—calls on his elder nephew, pretending to be Mr. Stanley, a poor relation; and Joseph not only protests his inability to assist him, but says that his uncle is the most avaricious of men and has scarcely given him anything, and that he himself has again assisted his extravagant brother by lending him large sums of money.

Finally, an attempt made by Joseph, who wants to marry Maria, and by Lady Sneerwell, who is in love with Charles, to prevent the union of the two young people by making out that Charles is in honour bound to marry Lady Sneerwell, miscarries through a creature of that lady's named Snake being persuaded to tell the truth. So Joseph, bankrupt in character and in expectations, has the mortification of seeing Maria contracted to Charles, Lady Teazle reconciled to Sir Peter, and his own reputation lost both with his ex-guardian and with his wealthy uncle.

SOPHOCLES

Antigone

Persons in the Drama

CREON
EURYDIKE, *wife of Creon*
HÆMON, *son of Creon*
TEIRESIAS
ANTIGONE
TWO MESSENGERS
ISMENE
GUARD
CHORUS OF THEBAN ELDERS

ACT I

SCENE.—*Thebes, in front of the Palace. Enter* ANTIGONE *and* ISMENE.

ANTIGONE: Ismene, mine own sister, dearest one,
Surely all woes that sprang from Œdipus
Will Zeus accomplish on us twain; and now
Hast thou not heard our chieftain's new decree?

Sophocles, the great master of Greek tragedy, was born at Colonus, about a mile from Athens. Though the date of his birth is not exactly known, it was probably about 495 B.C. He was educated with much care by his father, and showed such skill in poetry and music that he was selected after the victory of Salamis to lead a chorus of youths in a triumphal pæan composed by himself. Sophocles is justly accounted the most perfect of the Attic tragedians. In his hands tragedy becomes the true and faithful reflex of human feelings, passions and impulses. We have no knowledge of the order in which his tragedies were written, nor of the date on which "Antigone" was first produced. After the death of Œdipus, Antigone and her sister returned to Thebes. When Polyneikes with his seven armies advanced against the city, the invaders were overthrown,

ISMENE: No pleasant word or painful have I heard,
Since we were reft at once of brothers twain,
On one sad day.
ANTIGONE: Therefore I sent for thee
Beyond the gates, that thou may'st hear alone.
One, Eteocles, with rites of burial
Creon has honoured; but, for Polyneikes,
Unwept, unsepulchred, a prey to birds,
His corpse must lie. So Creon hath decreed.
Who disobeys, by stoning he must die.
Show now if thou art worthy of thy birth!
Wilt thou take part with me in risk and toil?
Wilt thou with me give burial to our dead?
ISMENE: Darest thou what Creon has forbidden?
ANTIGONE: Ay.
He has no right to keep me from mine own.
ISMENE: O sister, we two girls are left alone;
We cannot strive with men; this and far worse
We must obey. From those that are departed
I pray forgiveness, but obey our lords.
ANTIGONE: Now would I not, though thou should'st will it, share
The deed with thee. I, I will bury him;
Yea, and rejoice to die in doing it.
Dishonour if thou wilt what gods approve,
[*Exeunt. Enter Chorus of* THEBAN ELDERS, *and* CREON.
CREON: Friends, since the sons of Œdipus have fallen
Both on the self-same day with murderous blow,
Smiting and being smitten, now I hold
Their thrones, and all their powers of sovereignty.

---

and Polyneikes and Eteocles each fell by the other's hand. Creon, assuming the sovereignty, decreed that Eteocles should receive funeral honours, but that the corpse of Apolyneikes should be left unburied. The Greeks attached great importance to the due celebration of funeral rites, and Antigone resolved to perform the sacred duty to her brother in defiance of the man-made law which set at nought the laws of heaven. The scene is unchanged throughout. Sophocles died about 405 B.C.

Now, whoso, being called to guide a State,
Still counts his friend more worthy than his country,
I utterly despise him. Not as friend
I count my country's foe. Such my decree
Concerning those two sons of Œdipus.
Him who died fighting for our fatherland
Eteocles, I honour with all rites;
But him who sought with fire to desolate
His father's city and the shrines of God,
Him Polyneikes, none shall dare entomb
Nor any utter wail nor loud lament,
But leave his corpse unburied, by the dogs
And vultures mangled, foul to look upon.
Be ye, then, guardians of the things I speak;
Since watchmen are appointed for the corpse,
Consent not ye with those that disobey.

CHORUS: None are so foolish as to seek for death.

[*Enter a Guard.*

GUARD: Not with swift feet, but tarrying oft in doubt,
I come to thee, O king, in haste yet slow,
And though I tell of nought yet will I speak;
Yea, speak I will. The corpse . . . someone has been
But now and buried it; a little dust
O'er the skin scattering with the wonted rites.

CREON: What say'st thou? What man dared this deed of guilt?

GUARD: I know not. All the soil was dry and hard,
But he who did it went and left no sign.
No tomb was raised, but dust all lightly strewn.
Now when we found the thing, ill words arose,
Since every guard to every guard appeared
The man whose hand had done it; yet not one
Was privy to his schemes who planned the deed;
So swore we all. Therefore to tell thee all
Against my will I come, seeing 'tis true
That no man loves the messenger of ill.

CHORUS: Perchance in this is some divine intent.

CREON: Be thou not found, though full of years, a fool;
Nor deem that for this corpse the gods may care.
The gods approve not men of evil deeds.
These men were bribed to let the deed be done;
But they who bribed have laboured to their cost.
Unless ye find the very man whose hand
Has wrought this burial, and before mine eyes
Present him captive, yea, unless you show
To me the doers, ye shall say ere long
That ill-got gains still work their punishment. [*Exit.*

GUARD: God send we find him; should we find him not
You will not see me coming here again. [*Exit.*

CHORUS: Many the forms of life
Wondrous and strange to see,
But nought than man appears
More wondrous and more strange.
He with the wintry gale
O'er the white foaming sea
'Mid wild waves surging round
Wendeth his way across.
Earth of all gods from ancient days the first,
Unworn and undecayed,
He with his ploughs that travel o'er and o'er,
Furrowing with horse and mule
Wears ever year by year.
The thoughtless tribe of birds,
The beasts that roam the fields,
The brood in sea-depths born,
He takes them all in nets,
Knotted in snaring mesh,
Man wonderful in skill;
And by his subtle arts
He holds in sway the beasts
That roam the fields or tread the mountains' height
And brings the binding yoke

Upon the neck of horse with shaggy mane,
Or bull on mountain crest
Untamable in strength.
And speech, and thought as swift as speech,
And tempered mood for higher life and states,
These he has lent; and how to flee
O'er the clear cold of frost unkind,
O'er darts of storm and shower,
Man all providing. Unprovided he
Meeteth no chance the coming days may bring.
Only from Hades still
He fails to find escape,
Though skill of art may teach him how to flee
From depths of fell disease incurable.
So gifted with a wondrous might,
Above all fancy's dreams, with skill to plan,
Now unto evil, now to good,
He turns; while holding fast the laws,
His country's sacred rights
That rest upon the oath of gods on high,
High in the State; an outlaw from the State,
When loving in his pride
The thing that is not good.
Ne'er may he share my hearth nor yet my thoughts
Who worketh deeds of evil like to this.

[*Enter Guards, leading* ANTIGONE.

CHORUS: Lo! is not this the maid Antigone?
Oh wretched one, oh wretched father brood,
What means this? Surely 'tis not that they bring
Thee as a rebel 'gainst the King's decree,
And taken in the folly of thine act?

[*Enter* CREON.

GUARD: I come, although I swore the contrary,
Bringing this maiden whom in act we found
Decking the grave. The prize, O king, was mine,
And I am free of all this troublous coil.

CREON: Dost know and rightly speak the tale thou tellest?

GUARD: I saw her burying that self-same corpse.

CREON: Thou then, yes thou, who bend'st thy face to earth,
Confessest thou, or dost deny the deed?

ANTIGONE: I own I did it, and will not deny.

[*Exit Guard.*

CREON: Knewest thou the edicts which forbade these things,
And didst thou dare to disobey these laws?

ANTIGONE: Yes; for it was not Zeus who gave them forth,
Nor Justice, dwelling with the gods below,
Who traced these laws for all the sons of men;
Nor did I deem thy edicts strong enough
That thou, a mortal man, shouldst overpass
The unwritten laws of God that know no change.
They are not of to-day or yesterday,
But live for ever, nor can man assign
When first they sprang to being. Not through fear
Of any man's resolve was I prepared
Before the gods to bear the penalty
Of sinning against these. That I should die
I knew—how should I not?—though the decree
Had never spoken. And before my time,
If I shall die, I reckon this again.
For whoso lives, as I, in many woes,
How can it be but he shall gain by death?
And so for me to bear this doom of thine
Has nothing painful; but if I had left
My mother's son unburied on his death,
In that I should have suffered. But in this
I suffer not; and should I seem to thee
To do a foolish deed, 'tis simply this—
I bear the charge of folly from a fool.

CREON: Thou and thy sister shall not 'scape a doom

Most foul and shameful; for I charge her too
With having planned this deed of sepulchre.

[*Enter* ISMENE.

CREON: Wilt thou confess thou took'st thy part in this,
Or wilt thou swear thou didst not know of it?

ISMENE: I did the deed if she did, go with her,
Yea, share the guilt, and bear an equal blame.

ANTIGONE: Nay, justice will not suffer this, for thou
Didst not consent, nor did I let thee join.

ISMENE: What life to me is sweet, bereaved of thee?

ANTIGONE: Thou mad'st thy choice to live, and I to die.

ISMENE (*to* CREON): Wilt thou, then, slay thy son's betrothèd bride?

CREON: Wives that are vile I love not for my sons.

ISMENE: Ah, dearest Hæmon, how thy father shames thee!

CHORUS: Her doom is fixed, it seems, then; she must die.

CREON: Fixed, yes, by me and thee; no more delay.

[*Exeunt Guards, with* ANTIGONE *and* ISMENE.

CHORUS: Thy power, Oh Zeus, what haughtiness of men,
Yea, what can hold in check?
Which neither sleep, which maketh all things old,
Nor the long months of God that never fail,
Can for a moment seize,
But still as Lord supreme,
Waxing not old with time,
Thou dwellest in thy sheen of radiancy
On far Olympus height.
Through future near or far as through the past
One law holds ever good:
Nought comes to life of man unscathed throughout by woe.

[*Enter* HÆMON, *who vainly endeavours to persuade* CREON *from his purpose.*

CREON: Thou woman's slave, I say, prate on no more.

HÆMON: Wilt thou then speak and speaking listen not?

CREON: Nay, by Olympus, thou shalt not go free
To flout me with reproaches; lead her out,
Whom my soul hates, that she may die forthwith
Before mine eyes, and near her bridegroom here.

HÆMON: No! think it not; near me she shall not die;
And thou shalt never see my face alive,
That thou mayest storm at those who like to yield.

[*Exit.*

CHORUS: What form of death mean'st thou to slay her with?

CREON: Leading her on to where the desert path
Is loneliest, there alive in rocky cave
Will I immure her, just so much of food
Before her set as may avert pollution,
And save the city from the guilt of blood.

CHORUS: O Love, in every battle victor owned,
Love rushing on thy prey;
Now on a maiden's soft and blooming cheek
In secret ambush hid,
Now o'er the broad sea wandering at will
And now in shepherd's folds—
Of all the Undying Ones none 'scape from thee,
Nor yet of mortal men
Whose lives are measured as a fleeting day
And who has thee is frenzied in his soul.
Lo, I see her, I see Antigone,
Wend her sad lonely way
To that bride-chamber where we all must lie.

[*Enter* ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE: Behold, O men of this my fatherland,
I wend my last long way,
Seeing the last sunbeam now and nevermore;
With neither part nor lot
In marriage festival,
Nor hath the marriage hymn

Been sung for me as bride;
But I shall be the bride of Acheron.
Unwept, without a friend,
Unwed and whelmed in woe,
I journey on this road that open lies.
What law of heaven have I transgressed against?
What use for me, ill-starred one, still to look
To any god for succour, or to call
On any friend for aid? For holiest deed
I bear this charge of rank unholiness.
If facts like these the gods on high approve,
We, taught by pain, shall own that we have sinned;
But if these sin, I pray they suffer not
Worse evils than the wrongs they do to me.
O citadel of Thebes, my native land,
Ye gods of ancient days, I go and tarry not.

[ANTIGONE *is led out.*

CHORUS: So did the form of Danaë bear of old,
In brazen palace hid,
To lose the light of heaven;
And in her tomb-like chamber was enclosed;
Yet she, O child, was noble in her race,
And well she stored the golden shower of Zeus,
But great and dread the might of destiny!
Nor kingly wealth, nor war,
Nor tower, nor dark-hulled ships
Beaten by waves, escape.

[*Enter* TEIRESIAS, *guided by a boy.*

CREON: Say what new thing, Teiresias, brings thee here?

TEIRESIAS: Know that thou walk'st on fortune's razor-edge.

The gods no more hear prayers of sacrifice,
Nor own the flame that burns the victims' limbs.
Nor do the birds give cry of omen good,
But feed on carrion of a slaughtered corpse.
Yield to the dead and outrage not the slain.

CREON: That corpse ye shall not hide in any tomb;
Not though the evil birds of Zeus should bear
Their carrion morsels to the throne of God.
I know your augurs' tricks for lucre's sake.

TEIRESIAS: Know then, and know it well, that thou shalt see
Not many winding circuits of the sun
Before thou giv'st as quittance for the dead
A corpse by thee begotten; for that thou
Hast to the ground cast one that walked on earth,
And foully placed within a sepulchre
A living soul; and now thou keep'st from them,
The gods below, the corpse of one unblest,
Unwept, unhallowed. Therefore do they wait
The slow though sure avengers of the grave,
The dread Erinyes of the mighty gods. [*Exit* TEIRESIAS.

CREON: What shall I do? Speak ye, and I'll obey.

CHORUS: Go, then, and free the maiden from her tomb,
And give a grave to him who lies exposed.

CREON: I, I myself, who bound her, now will loose her.
[*Exit* CREON.

CHORUS: O thou of many names,
Of that Cadmeian maid
The glory and the joy
Whom Zeus as offspring owns,
Zeus thundering deep and loud;
O thou who lead'st the band,
The choral band of stars still breathing fire,
Lord of the hymns of night,
The child of highest Zeus! Appear, O king,
With Thyian maidens wild,
Who all night long in dance
With frenzied chorus sing
Thy praise, their Lord Iacchos.

[*Enter Messenger.*

MESSENGER: Ye men of Cadmos' and Amphion's house,
Hæmon lies dead and weltering in his blood.

CHORUS: By his own act or by his father's hand?
MESSENGER: His own, in wrath against his father's crime.
CHORUS: Lo, Creon's wife comes, sad Eurydike.
[*Enter* EURYDIKE.
EURYDIKE: I heard your words; yet tell it me,
Tell the tale once again.
MESSENGER: I'll tell thee, m'lady.
Even as we entered on the stone-paved home,
Death's marriage-chamber for the ill-starred maid,
We heard a shriek; and Creon cried aloud,
"The voice of Hæmon! Haste and search." We searched,
And in the furthest corner saw her hanging,
A cord about her neck; and him we found
Clasping her form in passionate embrace.
Then Creon wailed, "Come forth, my son, my son!"
And then the boy, with fierce, wild gleaming eyes,
Glares at him, spits upon his face, and draws,
Still without words, a sharp, two-handled sword;
Fell on the point and drave it through his breast
Full half its length, and clasping, yet alive,
The maiden's arms still soft, he there bleeds out
In broken gasps upon her frail white feet,
Swift stream of bloody shower. So they lie
Dead bridegroom with dead bride; and he has gained,
Poor boy, his marriage rites in Hades' home.
[*Exit* EURYDIKE.
CHORUS: Never a word of good or ill she spake;
What does she mean? For silence hard, no less
Than vain wild cries, is sign of bitter woe.
MESSENGER: Yea, there is terror in that silence hard.
[*Enter* CREON, *carrying* HÆMON'S *body.*
CHORUS: Lo, where the king himself draws nigh
And in his hands he bears a record clear;
No woe, if I may speak, by others caused,
Himself the great offender.

CREON: Woe for the sins of souls of evil mood,
Stern, mighty to destroy!
Oh, ye, who look on those of kindred race,
The slayers and the slain,
Woe for mine own rash plans that prosper not!
Woe for thee, son, but new in life's career
And by a new fate dying! Woe, ah woe!
Thou diest, thou art gone
Not by thine own ill concert but by mine.
Ah me!
I learn the grievous lesson. On mine head
God pressing sore hath smitten me and vexed
In ways most rough and terrible—ah me!
Shattering my joy as trampled under foot.

[*Enter another Messenger.*

MESSENGER: More sorrows in thine house too soon, it seems,
Thou need'st must come and see. Thy wife is dead.

CREON: Haven of death that none may pacify,
Why dost thou whelm me thus? Oh agony!
Thou who dost speak woes horrible to tell,
Thou tramplest on a man already slain.
What sayest thou? What new tiding dost thou bring?
My own wife's death, to crown my misery?

[*The gates open and show the dead body of* EURYDIKE.

Here in my arms I bear what was my son;
And there, ah woe! I look upon the dead.
Ah, wretched mother! ah, my son! my son!

MESSENGER: In frenzy wild she round the altar clung;
And at the last she cried a bitter cry
Against thy deeds, the murderer of thy son.

CREON: Will no one strike with sharp, two-edgèd sword
A deadly blow? Fearful my fate, alas!
How did she strike the stroke that wrought her death?

MESSENGER: With her own hand beneath her heart she stabbed,

Hearing her son's most pitiable fate.

CREON: Ah me! the fault is mine; on no one else
Of all that live the fearful guilt can come.
But I, even I, did slay thee, woe is me!
I, yes, I speak the truth. All near at hand
Is turned to evil; and upon my head
There falls a doom far worse than I can bear.

CHORUS: Man's highest blessedness in wisdom stands;
And in the things that touch the gods, 'tis best,
In word or deed, to shun unholy pride.
Great words of boasting bring great punishments,
And to grey hairs teach wisdom at the last.

TORQUATO TASSO

Jerusalem Delivered

I

THE pious arms I sing, and captain who
The hallowed sepulchre of Jesus freed;
Much did he both in field and council do,
And much he suffered in the glorious deed;
And Hell in vain opposed him, and in vain
Afric, allied with Asia, drew the sword:
Since Heaven its favour gave him, and again
His errant comrades to the cross restored.

Torquato Tasso, who was born at Sorrento, March 11, 1544, and who died at Rome, April 25, 1595, though immortalized by his magnificent sacred epic, "Gerusalemme Liberata," was likewise author of many other beautiful works, both prose and poetic. His pastoral drama, "Aminta," is so exquisite that it alone would have secured him lasting fame. He was son of Bernardo Tasso, himself a poet of no mean reputation. Young Torquato, as a student, became a fine classical scholar. His life was full of romance and of pathos. His father was exiled and his mother entered a convent. He never saw her again. Though he entered the legal profession, he soon forsook it for literary pursuits, and spent much time in deeply studying philosophy. He gained the generous patronage of Alfonso II., sovereign Duke of Ferrara, at whose court was spent the happiest period of his life. But misery followed, the primary cause being a presumptuous passion for Leonora, sister of the Duke of Este. This was first encouraged and then sternly repulsed. Some historians, however, dispute the accuracy of this tradition; but, whatever the cause may have been, the poet became the victim of profound melancholy, which Alfonso and his friends sought in vain to mitigate. In a paroxysm Tasso attempted to stab a domestic whom he took to be an enemy. Being placed under restraint, he escaped to his native Sorrento and recovered, but, wandering away, he quickly relapsed, and passed away in the prime of life.

Six years had nearly passed since in the East
The Christian host began their great crusade;
By storm Nicæa they had won, nor ceased
Till Antioch fell by art's strategic aid,
Which they then held against the Persian; they
Then took Tortosa from Judea's king;
To winter's rigour afterwards gave way,
Awaiting anxiously the coming spring.

The Supreme Being sends the archangel Gabriel to Godfred, who is encouraged to march without further delay on Jerusalem. Godfred delivers a speech, and this is followed by one from Peter the Hermit, after which Godfred is elected captain of the host. He at once reviews the troops, and they speedily commence their advance, which causes extreme consternation in the minds of the people of Jerusalem and their King Aladine, who prepares for resistance.

Aladine, instigated thereto by Ismeno, who promises to make it an effectual palladium to Jerusalem, seizes an image of the Virgin that was concealed in one of the Christian churches and places it in the royal mosque. In the course of the night this statue is removed therefrom, and the king, enraged at being unable to discover the author of the removal, resolves on a general massacre of the Christians. But the singular episode of Sophronia and Olindo averts this calamity.

None tried defence or flight—none sought for grace
Or proffered supplication. But released
In a strange manner was that timid race,
And safety found where it could hope for least.

In maiden pride there dwelt a maiden there
High-souled and passing beautiful; but she
Seemed for her peerless beauty not to care,
Or only as adorning modesty.
And to her greater merit she withdrew,
And hid her merits beneath humble roof;
Away from glances of gallants she flew,
And from their honeyed words remained aloof.

But beauty cannot wholly be concealed,
Beauty which but to see is to admire.
Nor e'en had Love consented, who revealed
Her charms and did a youthful bosom fire.

Cupid! who blind at times, now Argus art,
Dost ope and turn, and now blindfold'st the eyes,
Through thee to maiden's bower, most vestal part,
Past thousand guards the glance of lover flies.

Sophronia she, Olindo he: they were
Both of one town, in common creed both taught;
He was as modest as the maid was fair,
Much wished, hoped little, and demanded nought,
Nor dared, or knew not how his love to tell;
She spurned or saw him not, or nought perceived.
This hitherto is what the youth befell:
Unseen, unknown, or was but ill received.

Sophronia resolves to save her fellow-Christians by accusing herself of the theft. She pretends to Aladine that she had not only stolen it but had burnt it, and the enraged king commands that she be burnt at the stake. Olindo appears and declares that he it was who stole the image and hid it; and he also is condemned to the stake. But they are saved by the coming of a renowned Moslem heroine, a female knight, who rides up to the scene and boldly proclaims that the cruel deed must not be perpetrated. The king yields, but says that they must be banished from Palestine with many other Christians.

II

Egyptian ambassadors wait on Godfred to negotiate for an arrangement whereby the Crusaders shall be left possessed of the regions they have conquered without molestation, on condition that they agree to leave Jerusalem unassailed. The proposal is spurned and war is declared.

'Tis light. The winds are hushed, the waters still,
And the mute world is wrapped in death-like sleep;
The wearied animals—the fish that fill
Clear lakes, or tenant the unfathomed deep;
The beasts concealed in fold or crouched in lair,
The painted songsters in oblivion gay—
'Neath the deep horrors of the lightless air
Appease their hearts, and dream their cares away.

But not the pious chief nor faithful camp
Gives way to sleep, or for a moment rests;
To see the welcome dawn relume her lamp
Creates such longing in their eager breasts
That their approach it might illumined make
To Salem's walls, the goal of their crusade:
They watch each moment for one ray to break
And pierce the gloom of night's invidious shade.

Already was awake the herald air
To announce that fair Aurora 'gan to rise,
Who decked herself and wreathed her golden hair
With fresh-blown roses culled in Paradise;
When from the camp, ere yet the reveille rung,
There rose a murmur from the deep-toned throats
Of arming thousands. The shrill trumpet's tongue
Then pealed forth livelier and more tuneful notes.

The wise commander with paternal care
Directs their bent and regulates their force;
Since much more easy near Charybdis 'twere
To turn the rolling billows from their course,
Or Boreas check when down the Apennines
He sweeps, engulfing vessels in the sea.
He orders, starts, by trumpet rules the lines
Rapidly—still by rule, though rapidly.

Winged are their anxious hearts and winged their feet;
Unconscious of their speed, on, on they fly.
But when the advancing sun with fervent heat
Had struck the arid plains and risen on high,
Lo! fair Jerusalem appears in sight,
Lo! countless fingers point there, and exclaim
Ten thousand voices that in one unite,
"Hail! Hail! Jerusalem, Jerusalem!"

Clorinda, the Moslem heroine, makes the first sally from the city, at the head of a band of warriors, encounters a foraging party, and kills Gardo, its leader. Godfred orders Tancredi to advance to their support. Meanwhile Erminia, daughter of the

deceased King of Antioch, points out to King Aladine, from the summit of a high tower, the principal leaders of the Christian army. In an encounter between Clorinda and Tancredi the Pagans are driven back. Godfred calls off his troops, reconnoitres the city, and encamps near the South Gate. Satan, or, as he is here called, Pluto, enraged at the successes of the Christians, convenes a council in the infernal regions to consider the best means of opposing their further progress.

III

While thus the Franks their warlike engines made,
To have them ready for their high emprise,
Man's mighty foe from Acheron's gloomy shade
Against the Christians turned his livid eyes;
And seeing them on their pious work intent,
Bit both his lips, with rankling fury stung;
While like a wounded bull his rage found vent
In bellowing roars that through Gehenna rung.

Then having turned his every thought to bring
Upon the Christians ruin most complete,
His legions are commanded by their king
(Terrific council!) round his throne to meet,
As though a light emprise—insensate!—'twere
The Heavenly Will's fixed purpose to withstand.
Fool! that would try to equal God, or dare
Forget the thunders of his angered hand!

Straightway the gods of hell in several swarms
Rushed to the lofty gates from all around.
Oh, what strange shapes they had—what horrid forms!
What dread—what death in their gaunt eyeballs frowned!
With cloven foot some print the burning soil,
Whose human heads contorted snakes entwined;
And like a scourge in many a sinuous coil,
Voluminous tails the hybrids drag behind.

Here countless filthy Harpies you might mark;
Centaurs by thousands; Sphinxes, Gorgons pale;
Voracious Scyllas without number bark;
Huge Pythons hiss, and hideous Hydras wail.

Dark lurid flames misshaped Chimæras pour;
Here Polyphemus stalks, there Geryon;
And monsters strange ne'er seen or known before,
With looks diverse, confused, and blent in one.

After delivering an address to the gods of the inferno, Pluto sends his emissaries to the upper world. At their instigation, Idraotes, Prince of Damascus, a magician, sends his niece Armida, who is likewise an enchantress, to endeavour to seduce their chiefs. Arriving at the Christian camp and interviewing Eustace, she is by him introduced to Godfred. Giving him a feigned account of herself, she requests assistance, which Godfred refuses; but at length, at the instance of his brother Eustace, and others of the younger knights, he permits ten of them to accompany her. She seeks by artful stratagems to induce others to join her.

Eustace, being in love with Armidá, persuades Rinaldo, of whom he is jealous, to solicit the place of captain of the Adventurers. Gernando, brother of the King of Norway, aspires to the same post, and being instigated by an evil spirit, uses expressions to the disparagement of Rinaldo, who kills him in presence of the whole army. Godfred having determined to punish the offender, Rinaldo, by the advice of Guelpho and Tancredi, quits the camp. The Pagan champion Argante challenges the Christian camp to single combat. His challenge is accepted on their part by Tancredi.

In rest each warrior placed his knotty spear,
Its point directing upwards. Ne'er did spring
Of couchant tiger, nor the bound of deer,
Nor swoop of eagle on its swiftest wing,
Equal the speed with which Tancredi here,
And there Arganté, dashed to the assault;
Their lances shivered when in mid career,
Whence sparks and splinters flew to heaven's blue vault.

A fearful combat ensued, in which the antagonists were so exhausted that at length heralds from both sides stopped the encounter on the approach of night. Erminia, in love with Tancredi, is so eager to learn the state of his wounds, that she puts on Clorinda's armour, and leaves the city by night, purposing to proceed to the Christian camp. She is intercepted on her way thither by a party of Frank soldiers, and obliged to flee. Tancredi, supposing her to be Clorinda, hastens to her aid.

Erminia in her flight is carried by her horse to the banks of the Jordan, where for some time she abides in a shepherd's cottage. Tancredi, losing his way in pursuit of her, is treacherously conducted to Armida's castle, into which he is entrapped

and confined. After the lapse of a few days Argante presents himself at the Christian camp to renew the flight with Tancredi. Tancredi being absent, Raymond, not being willing that Godfred should expose himself, offers himself as Tancredi's substitute, and the two champions fight. The compact of the battle is broken by an archer wounding Raymond. A terrific storm drives the Christians into their entrenchments.

A Danish warrior arrives at the camp and relates the slaughter of the Danish Crusaders, of whom he is the sole survivor, and the heroic death of their prince and leader, Sweno. Discord arises in the camp on account of false news of Rinaldo's death, spread by Argillan. Godfred quells the mutiny and casts the ringleader into prison. Solyman, instigated by Alecto, attacks by night the Christian camp, and Latinus and his five sons are slain. The archangel Michael is sent down by God and drives back the demons.

Now as resounding through the heavenly halls
Rings the full concord of seraphic strains,
The King of kings the archangel Michael calls,
Whose arms of lucent-diamond brightly shine.
" Perceiv'st thou not how hell's foul fiends," he cried,
" Against my faithful flock their arms have hurled,
And from their low abysses of the dead
Have upward risen to disturb the world?

" Go, tell them henceforth to give up the care
Of war to warriors, as is fair and right;
Nor spread disturbance, nor pollute the air
Of earth below, nor heaven's pure regions blight;
Let them return to their just punishment,
And Acheron's gloom, their fit abode, regain,
And there themselves and all lost souls torment;
Thus I decreed, thus do I now ordain."

The winged archangel at these words inclined
Low at His feet divine, with reverence fraught,
Then spread his golden pinions to the wind,
So rapid they as to exceed all thought.
The fire he passed, and realms of light where dwelled
The blest in their immovable abode,
And next the vault of crystalline beheld
That, rolling round, with stars unnumbered glowed.

Now on the left saw Jove and Saturn roll,
Differing in motion and distinct in sight,
And others never swerving from their goal,
Since moved and quickened by celestial might;
Then passed from cloudless realms of endless day,
Shining and bright, whence thunder falls and rain,
To where the world now fades and melts away,
Dies in its struggles now—now lives again;

And came dividing with immortal plume
The darkness dense and dreariness profound,
Gilding with light divine the horrid gloom,
Light which his face in sparks diffused around;
Thus after showers of rain the god of day
The humid clouds with sheen prismatic dyes;
So cleaves a shooting star the liquid way,
And on earth's lap falls headlong from the skies.

The demons being driven back by Michael, the conflict proceeds between the Christians and Pagans. Argillan escapes from prison and performs great exploits; but, while the battle is still doubtful, a band of fifty Crusaders that had followed Armida appears unexpectedly and turns the tide in favour of the Christians, who pursue their antagonists with great havoc to the city walls.

Solyman resolves to join the Egyptian army. On his way thither he meets Ismeno, who takes him back to Jerusalem in an enchanted car. They enter the city by a subterranean passage, and make their way to where the king sits in council. The speeches of the king, of Argante, and of Orcano excite the indignation of Solyman. Godfred receives from the knights that were seduced by Armida an account of their adventures. They disprove the reports of Rinaldo's death. His future fame is foretold by Peter the Hermit.

By Peter the Hermit's advice, Godfred, previous to assaulting the town, conducts his army to hear mass on the Mount of Olives, where they receive the benediction of the bishops, William and Aldemar. In consequence of a previous vow, Godfred assumes the dress and resolves to share the perils of the assault as a private soldier. Other princes follow his example. The town assaulted, a breach is made. Clorinda wounds or kills seven of the principal leaders, lastly Godfred himself, who is obliged to quit the field, leaving Guelpho in charge of the army. Guelpho is also wounded, and, encouraged by this success,

Argante invites Solyman to sally out. They are met and repulsed by Tancredi. An angel descends from heaven and heals Tancredi's wounds. He returns, reanimates his troops, and withdraws them at the approach of night.

The Christians are afflicted with unusual heat and drought. Godfred prays to the Almighty. His prayer is heard and God refreshes the camp with merciful rain. Godfred in a dream is transported to heaven, and there meets Hugo, who advises him to recall Rinaldo. Godfred consents. Two knights are sent to find him, and after romantic adventures they reach the Fortunate Isles, where they find Rinaldo and Armida in her palace, which is surrounded by enchanted gardens. During her momentary absence they make themselves known, and Rinaldo, seized with sudden remorse, follows them out of the palace. Armida, in despair at finding him gone, follows, and seeks to entice him to return, but in vain. In her rage she destroys her palace, mounts her car, and returns to her castle by the Dead Sea.

Rinaldo converses with Godfred. He then prays on Mount Olivet, and afterwards proceeds to the enchanted forest, overcomes its magic, and returns to the camp. A carrier pigeon, pursued by a falcon, takes refuge in Godfred's bosom. He finds a letter under her wing from the Egyptian commander to the King of Jerusalem, promising to relieve him in a few days. At this Godfred at once gives orders for the assault. The attack takes place. Rinaldo is the first to mount the wall. The archangel Gabriel appears to Godfred.

The archangel Michael, visible to none,
Appearèd then before Prince Godfred's sight,
Clad in such glistening armour that the sun,
Altho' unclouded, had appeared less bright.
"The hour has come, O pious prince," he cries,
"From her fell yoke Jerusalem to free;
Droop not, nay, droop not thy bedazzled eyes:
See with what forces Heaven assisteth thee.

"Lift up thine eyes then and behold immense
Immortal hosts assembled in the sky,
While the thick clouds that dim thy mortal sense,
And overshadow thy humanity,
I will asunder rend, that thou may'st there
Regard unbodied spirits face to face,
And the divine effulgent radiance bear
Of angels' beauty for a little space.

"Behold, you spirits that Christ's champions were,
Now blest immortal tenants of the skies,
Combat with thee, with thee still seek to share
The crowning honour of the great emprise;
Lo, where the dust with wreaths of smoke unites,
And o'er the crumbling ruin darkly lowers,
In that dense cloud the gallant Hugo fights,
And shaketh the foundations of the towers.

"There as in life the lofty northern gate
Dudoné see with fire and sword assail,
Arm the assailants and them animate,
The scaling ladders which he holds, to scale;
He who enrobed in venerable stole,
And crowned with mitre, stands upon the hill,
Is Bishop Aldemar, thrice happy soul!
See how on you he signs his blessing still.

"Lift up still higher thy glowing eyes upon
Heaven's host entire together joined." Whence he
Looked up and saw them all drawn out in one
Innumerable, wingèd soldiery.
In three great squadrons, each extended wide,
And in three ranks, was ranged the heavenly host,
Which more extended as the more outside
The circles were, and least where innermost.

Here he cast down, o'erpowered, then raised his eyes,
Nor more the glorious spectacle could see,
But, looking round upon his troops, descries
That from all sides on them shone victory.
Some followed where Rinaldo led the way,
And slew the Syrians that dared make a stand.
Godfred at this could brook no more delay,
But snatched an ensign from its bearer's hand.

For a short space of time the Soldan makes a show of opposing Rinaldo, but as his affrighted Turks forsake him, he deems it prudent to effect a hasty retreat, rather than to waste his life uselessly. Thus the victor presses forward and triumphantly plants the standard of the Cross on the walls.

The victor ensign waved in myriad wreaths
Proudly, as conscious of the victory won;
On it the air, it seemed, more softly breathes,
On it more brilliantly to shine the sun;
And every lance and arrow launched 'gainst it
Seemed or to shun it or rebound from thence;
And Sion and the mountain opposite
Their heads to bow with joy and reverence.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

The Idylls of the King

I.—Geraint and Enid

THE brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court,
A tributary prince of Devon, one
Of that great order of the Table Round,
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,
And loved her, as he loved the light of heaven.
And Enid loved the Queen, and with true heart
Adored her, as the stateliest and the best
And loveliest of all women upon earth.
But when a rumour rose about the Queen,
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
Not less Geraint believed it; and there fell

Alfred Tennyson was born on August 6, 1809, in the Rectory of Somersby, Lincolnshire, England, the fourth child of a family of twelve. He showed a marked predilection for poetry from his earliest boyhood, and in 1827, in conjunction with his brother Charles, published an anonymous collection entitled "Poems by Two Brothers." In the following year he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where in 1829 he took the Chancellor's prize for a blank verse poem, and there likewise formed a friendship with A. H. Hallam and other young men who were destined to become more widely known. In 1830 appeared his first volume of independent poems, and this was followed in 1832 by another volume, which, even if he had never written anything more, would have preserved his name in the front rank of English poets. The death of Hallam in 1833 created a profound impression on Tennyson's mind, which, added to the natural shyness and reserve of his temperament, now prompted a literary obscurity that remained unbroken for nine years. To this period, however, belong the beginnings of "The Idylls of the King" and "In Memoriam." The volume of poems which appeared in 1842 definitely established Tennyson's reputation among his countrymen, and from now on he devoted himself with extraor-

A horror on him, lest his gentle wife
Through that great tenderness for Guinevere,
Had suffered, or should suffer, any taint
In nature: wherefor going to the king,
He made this pretext, that his princedom lay
Close on the borders of a territory
Wherein were bandit earls and caitiff knights;
He therefore craved permission to depart,
And there defend his marches; and the King
Allowing it, the Prince and Enid rode,
And fifty knights rode with them, to the shores
Of Severn, and they past to their own land;
Where, thinking, that if ever yet was wife
True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
He compassed her with sweet observances
And worship, never leaving her, and grew
Forgetful of his promise to the King,
Forgetful of his glory and his name,
Forgetful of his princedom and its cares.

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dinary energy of production and single-mindedness of purpose to his art. In 1850 he was appointed Poet Laureate in succession to Wordsworth, and in 1884 was raised to the peerage. He died on October 6, 1892, in full possession of all his faculties and still actively engaged in writing, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Four years later the lady whom he had married in 1850 also died in her eighty-second year. The first series of "The Idylls of the King," containing the four poems which we give here, and embodying the Arthurian legends (*cf.* Vol. VI, p. 145), first appeared in 1859, and at once achieved a popular success beyond the experience of any other poet save possibly Scott, Byron, or Victor Hugo. Together with those poems in which the theme he chose was of a more contemporary interest, such as "Locksley Hall," "Maud," "The Princess," and "The Northern Farmer," and the shorter lyrical pieces, "Œnone," "The Lotus-Eaters," "Ulysses," or the elegy "In Memoriam," "The Idylls" rank with the best of Tennyson's work and serve to illustrate those qualities which are at once his strength and his weakness as a poet—namely, a too great elegance or refinement of thought and imagery, at the expense of dramatic intensity and originality of ideas, but yet conjoined with such a noble ease and richness of harmonious diction as to constitute him one of the world's master singers.

Enid grieved over her husband's uxoriousness, and one morning, before they had risen, some words which she uttered as she lay awake, to the effect that she was no true wife (or she would rouse him from his effeminacy) came to his ears; and Geraint, hearing but fragments of her speech, feared she was sighing after some gay knight at Camelot, and rousing himself, and ordering his charger and her palfrey to be saddled, said he would ride forth into the wilderness and bade her ride with him clad in her worst and meanest dress. So Enid, still anxious to please, though not understanding, donned a faded silk dress, the very same in which Geraint had first met her, when having taken shelter at her father's castle, he had overthrown her cousin Edyrn, the "Sparrowhawk," in the tourney and so restored to Yniol the earldom and possessions which his nephew had so long usurped.

That morning, when they both had got to horse,
Perhaps because he loved her passionately,
And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,
Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce
Upon a head so dear, in thunder said:
"Not at my side! I charge you ride before,
Ever a good way on before; and this
I charge you, on your duty as a wife,
Whatever happens, not to speak to me,
No, not a word!" And Enid was aghast;
And forth they rode: and then he cried again,
"To the wilds!" And Enid leading down the tracks
Through which he bade her lead him on, they past
The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds,
Grey swamps and pools, waste places of the hern,
And wilderness, perilous paths, they rode.
Round was their pace at first, but slackened soon:
A stranger meeting them had surely thought,
They rode so slowly, and they looked so pale,
That each had suffered some exceeding wrong.
For he was ever saying to himself
"O, I that wasted time to tend upon her,
To compass her with sweet observances——"
And there he broke the sentence in his heart
Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue

May break it, when his passion masters him.
And she was ever praying the sweet heavens
To save her dear lord whole from any wound.
And ever in her mind she cast about
For that unnoticed failing in herself,
Which made him look so cloudy and so cold;
Till the great plover's human whistle amazed
Her heart, and glancing round the waste she feared
In every wavering brake an ambuscade;
Then thought again, "If there be such in me
I might amend it by the grace of heaven,
If he would only speak and tell me of it."

As they rode on Enid, who was in front, was aware of three tall knights waiting, mounted and armed, behind a rock, and she went back, and, disregarding his command that she should keep silence, warned Geraint of his danger. But he answered her but wrathfully, and having slain the knights, bound their suits of armour to their horses and bade Enid drive them on before her. Again they rode on, and presently Enid noticed in the shade of a deep wood three more horsemen waiting, wholly armed. Once more she turned back and warned her husband, and he again answered her angrily, encountered the horsemen, slew them, and bound their suits of armour tc their horses, and he now bade her drive all six horses on before her. That night they stopped in a little town where Earl Limours, a former suitor of Enid's, had his palace; and Geraint entertained Limours nobly, who, however, the next day, being desirous of seizing Enid, repaid the kindness of his host by attacking him on the road. But Geraint overthrew Limours and dispersed his followers, not, however, without receiving a wound which obliged Enid and himself to be the guests of another caitiff earl, Doorm, surnamed the Bull. Doorm, thinking Geraint to be next door to death, kept on insulting Enid by proffers of his love, till at last Geraint, who was but feigning extreme illness, having watched the boor smite her lightly on the cheek, sprang from the hollow shield in which he lay, and with one sweep of his sword, struck Doorm's head from his shoulders, a feat which caused every man and woman in the hall to fly.

And the two
Were left alone together, and he said:
"Enid, I have used you worse than that dead man;
Done you more wrong: we both have undergone
That trouble which has left me thrice your own:

Henceforward I will rather die than doubt.
And here I lay this penance on myself,
Not, though mine own ears heard you yestermorn—
You thought me sleeping, but I heard you say,
I heard you say, that you were no true wife:
I swear I will not ask your meaning in it:
I do believe yourself against yourself,
And will henceforward rather die than doubt."

As they were riding away, they were met by a horseman who turned out to be Enid's former braggart lover and cousin, Edyrn, now reformed and a Knight of the Round Table. He told them that he came as the mouthpiece of the King, who was close behind, to Doorm, bidding him to disband his forces and to submit himself to his liege. Thereupon Geraint related the story of what had taken place in Doorm's palace, and Edyrn, seeing Enid shrink every now and then from him, confessed to her how his being overthrown in the tourney by Geraint had made a new and a true man of him. This account of Edyrn's reformation was confirmed by the King, whom the three shortly met. Greeting Enid and Geraint, he said to the latter:

Now behold me come
To cleanse this common sewer of all my realm,
With Edyrn and with others: have you looked
At Edyrn? Have you seen how nobly changed?
This work of his is great and wonderful.
His very face with change of heart is changed.
The world will not believe a man repents:
And this wise world of ours is mainly right.
Full seldom *does* a man repent, or use
Both grace and will to pick the vicious quitch
Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
And make all clean, and plant himself afresh.
Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart
As I will weed this land before I go.
I, therefore, made him of our Table Round,
Not rashly, but have proved him every way
One of our noblest, our most valorous,
Sanest and most obedient" . . .
So spake the king; low bowed the prince, and felt

His work was neither great nor wonderful,
And past to Enid's tent; and thither came
The King's own leech to look into his hurt;
And Enid tended on him there; and there
Her constant motion round him, and the breath
Of her sweet tendance hovering over him
Filled all the genial courses of his blood
With deeper and with ever deeper love.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, and the King had cleansed the land of the bandit knights, they past to Caerleon-upon-Usk, where the great Queen Guinevere again embraced her friend Enid. Afterwards the prince and his wife returned to their own land, where they lived happily and had many children, Geraint at last meeting a fair death in fighting for the King against the heathen of the northern sea.

II.—Merlin and Vivien

One day Merlin, the most famous man of all his times, Merlin the Wizard, the Bard, who knew the starry heavens and all the arts, Merlin who had built the King his havens, ships, and halls, fell into a great melancholy; and taking a little boat, he crossed the seas, touched the Breton sands, and made for the wild woods of Broceliande followed by the wily Vivien, who pretended to be enamoured of the old man in order that she might obtain from him the knowledge of a famous spell which would put him wholly in her power.

There lay she all her length and kissed his feet,
As if in deepest reverence and in love.
A twist of gold was round her hair; a robe
Of samite without price that more exprest
Than hid her, clung about her lissome limbs.
And while she kissed them, crying, "Trample me,
Dear feet, that I have followed through the world,
And I will pay you worship; tread me down
And I will kiss you for it;" he was mute,
So dark a forethought rolled about his brain.
And lissome Vivien holding by his heel,
Writhed toward him, sliding up his knee and sat.
Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet

Together, curved an arm about his neck,
Clung like a snake; and letting her left hand
Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a leaf,
Made with her right a comb of pearl to part
The lists of such a beard as youth gone out
Had left in ashes: then adding all at once,
"And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom" drew
The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard
Across her neck and bosom to her knee,
And called herself a gilded summer fly,
Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,
Who meant to eat her up in that wild wood
Without one word.

Gradually by very slow degrees, Merlin was won over half to believe in Vivien's sincerity, till at length she saucily told him that, do what he would to prevent her from finding his book of spells, she would read the charm.

"*You* read the book, my pretty Vivien!
Oh, ay, it is but twenty pages long,
But every page having an ample marge,
And every marge enclosing in the midst
A square of text that looks a little blot,
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas;
And every square of text an awful charm,
Writ in a language that has long gone by:
So long, that mountains have arisen since,
With cities on their flanks—*you* read the book!
And every margin scribbled, crost, and cramm'd
With comment, densest condensation, hard
To mind and eye, but the long sleepless nights
Of my long life have made it easy to me!
And none can read the text, not even I;
And none can read the comment but myself;
And in the comment did I find the charm."

And he told her that, though she might keep her oath and refrain from practising the charm on him, yet he would not disclose it to her lest she might essay it on some knight of the Round

Table who she thought gossiped of her. This declaration led Vivien to denounce various of the knights for conduct unbefitting their order, but Merlin in every case was able to show that the charge was mere slander, until Vivien touching on the King

Then Merlin to his own heart, loathing, said:
"O true and tender! O my liege and king!
O selfless man and stainless gentleman,
Who wouldst against thine own eyewitness fain
Have all men true and leal, all women pure;
How in the mouths of base interpreters,
From over-fineness not intelligible
To things with every sense as false and foul,
As the poach'd filth that floods the middle street,
Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame!"
But Vivien deeming Merlin overborne
By instance, recommenced, and let her tongue
Rage like a fire among the noblest names,
Defaming and defacing, till she left
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad clean.
Her words had issue other than she will'd.

For Merlin, disgusted at her railing, muttered to himself "wanton," a phrase which brought from her a torrent of reproachful and indignant protest—in the midst of which a storm coming on, Merlin urged her to come and shelter in the oak in which he lay. But Vivien refused to do so until, as a proof of his love, he told her the charm. A deafening crash of thunder soon forced her, however, to rush into Merlin's arms, with this result:

She call'd him lord and liege,
Her seer, her bard, her silver star of eve,
Her God, her Merlin, the one passionate love
Of her whole life. . . .
. . . . . .
And Merlin, overtalked and overworn,
Soon yielded, told her all the charm, and slept.
Then, in one moment she put forth the charm
Of woven paces and of waving hands,

And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
And lost to life and use and name and fame.
Then crying, "I have made his glory mine,"
And shrieking out "O fool!" the wanton leapt
Adown the forest, and the thicket closed
Behind her, and the forest echo'd "fool."

III.—Lancelot and Elaine

Elaine the Fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the East
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot.
How came the lily-maid by that good shield
Of Lancelot, she that knew not even his name?
He left it with her, when he rode to tilt
For the great diamond in the diamond jousts,
Which Arthur had ordained, and by that name
Had named them since a diamond was the prize.
For Arthur, when none knew from whence he came,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyonnesse,
Had found a glen, gray boulder and black tarn,
And in a misty moonshine, unawares,
Had trodden a crown'd skeleton, and the skull
Broke from the nape, and from the skull the crown
Rolled into light.
Thereafter, when a king, he had the gems,
Nine diamonds, one in front and four aside,
Plucked from the crown, and showed them to his knights,
And said to them, "Henceforward let there be,
Once every year, a joust for one of these:
For so by nine years proof we needs must learn
Which is our mightiest." Thus the king had spoke,
And eight years past, eight jousts had been, and still
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the year,

With purpose to present them to the Queen,
When all were won; but meaning all at once
To snare her royal fancy with a boon
Worth half her realm, had never spoken word.

But when the joust for the central diamond—the last and the largest, was about to take place, Lancelot, thinking the queen, who was ill, wanted him to stay with her, declined taking part in the contest on the plea that he was not yet recovered from an old wound. Finding, however, that the Queen felt uneasy both at his resolve and at the motive that prompted him to make it, he decided, at her suggestion to go to the lists, not, however, in his own name, but as an unknown knight. Riding off, then, to the west, he came to the castle of Astolat, where he met the Lord of Astolat and his two strong sons, Sir Torre who had been hurt in his first tilt, and therefore was prevented from going to the jousts, and Sir Lavaine who intended to enter them with a notion of winning the diamond for his fair sister Elaine. Sir Torre readily agreed to lend Sir Lancelot his blank shield, and in the course of conversation the latter paid a fitting compliment to the Lily-maid.

He spoke and ceased: the Lily-maid Elaine,
Won by the mellow voice before she looked,
Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had marred his face, and marked it ere his time.
Another sinning on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the world,
Had been the sleeker for it; but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drove him into wastes and solitudes
For agony, who was yet a living soul.
Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man
That ever among ladies ate in hall,
And noblest, when he lifted up his eyes.
However marr'd, of more than twice her years,
Seamed with an ancient sword-cut on the cheek,
And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
And loved him, with that love which was her doom.
Then the great knight, the darling of the Court,

Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
Stept with all grace . . . . .
Whom they with meats and vintage of their best,
And talk and minstrel melody entertained.

After the meal was over, Lancelot, on the invitation of Lavaine, told of Arthur's glorious wars, and concluding, said,

"I never saw his like: there lives no greater leader."
While he uttered this,
Low to her heart said the Lily-maid
"Save your own self, fair lord," and when he fell
From talk of war to traits of pleasantry,
She still took note that when the living smile
Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
Of melancholy severe, from which again,
Whenever in her hovering to and fro
The Lily-maid had striven to make him cheer,
There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness
Of manner and of nature: and she thought
That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.
And all night long his face before her lived,
Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full
Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.

The next morning she got up early to watch Lancelot and her brother go forth to the jousts, and she persuaded the former, who told her he had never yet worn favour of any lady in the lists, to wear her favour in his helmet, a red sleeve, broidered with pearls. He on his part, committed his shield to her keeping, and then the two knights rode forth, and the younger was presently informed that his companion was the great Sir Lancelot of the Lake. The jousts now presently took place, and Lancelot again defeated his competitors and won the diamond. But being severely wounded, he stayed not to receive it, but rode off to be tended by an old hermit, a friend of his, in whose cell he lay for many weeks, hovering between life and death. Meantime the king had summoned his nephew Gawain, and handing the gem over to him, commanded him to search for the stranger knight and to give him the diamond. But both king and queen sat through the banquet that concluded the jousts in no merry mood, for he learned from her that the stranger knight was Lancelot, and that therefore Lancelot had been dallying with the truth; and she learned from him that her lover had for the

first time worn a lady's favour in his helm, and that not her own. In the meanwhile, Gawain, stopped on his quest at Astolat, and having discovered in Elaine the owner of the red sleeve and told her that the shield she guarded was the shield of Lancelot, handed over to her the diamond, and returned to the Court. Elaine, anxious to tend her knight in his illness, obtained permission of her father to go to him, accompanied by her brother, Sir Torre, and, coming to the hermit's cave, handed over the diamond to Sir Lancelot. Long she waited on him in his sickness day and night, till the hermit, skilled in all the science of the time, told him that her care had saved his life.

And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine,
Would listen for her coming, and regret
Her parting step, and hold her tenderly;
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their best—
Closest and sweetest; and had died the death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And, peradventure had he seen her first,
She might have made this and that other world
Another world for the sick man; but now,
The shackles of an old love straitened him,
His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

When his deadly hurt was at last whole, Sir Lancelot, Sir Lavaine, and Elaine returned to Astolat, where the great knight, anxious to show his gratitude to the Lily-maid, prest upon her that she should ask some goodly gift of him. Long she refused, but in the end she asked to be his wife, and on his telling her that he would never marry, she fell down in a swoon. Soon after, he departed for the Court, and, cruel only to be kind, bade her no farewell, nor waved his hand to her as he rode off. After his departure, Elaine drooped daily, and a few days before her death she gained from her father a promise that when she died her bed should be richly decked and her body, richly adorned, should be laid in it, and that the bier should be taken to the river, placed in a barge clothed in black, and so be conveyed to the Court to meet the king. These instructions were accordingly carried out; and on the very day on which Lancelot handed over the ninth diamond to the Queen—who, in her angry jealousy, flung it from her into the river, the dead Elaine, holding in her hand a letter avowing her unreturned love for Lancelot, appeared in her barge under the walls of the palace. The

King opened the letter, and read it to his lords and ladies, who wept for pity. Then he ordered Elaine to be buried in a magnificent tomb, and after the burial spoke his regret to Lancelot that he had never married, and could not marry the Lily-maid. As for the Queen, she asked Sir Lancelot's forgiveness for her anger, saying that hers was "jealousy in love." But Lancelot pondered much over matters, deeming Elaine's love tenderer than Guinevere's.

IV.—Guinevere

Queen Guinevere had fled the Court, and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her save a little maid,
A novice. One low light betwixt them burn'd,
Blurr'd by the creeping mist; for all abroad,
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land was still.

For it had happened thus at Court, that Modred, who was all "ear and eye," had climbed one day to

The high top of the garden wall
To spy some secret scandal if he might.
He little saw, for Lancelot passing by
Spied where he crouched, and as the gardener's hand
Picks from the colewort a green caterpillar,
So from the high wall and the flowering grove
Of grasses, Lancelot plucked him by the heel,
And cast him as a worm upon the way.

But when Lancelot told this matter to the Queen

at first she laughed,
Then laughed again, but faintlier, for indeed
She half foresaw that he, the subtle beast,
Would track her guilt until he found, and hers
Would be for evermore a name of scorn.
Henceforward, too, the Powers that tend the soul,
To help it from the death that cannot die,

And save it, even in extremes, began
To vex and plague her. Many a time for hours,
Beside the placid breathings of the King,
In the dead night, grim faces came and went
Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—
Like to some doubtful noise of creaking doors,
Heard by the watcher in a haunted house,
That keeps the rust of murder on the walls—
Held her awake; or if she slept, she dream'd
An awful dream.

So Lancelot and she agreed to part, after one final meeting.

Passion-pale they met
And greeted: hands in hands, and eye to eye,
Low on the border of her couch they sat
Stammering and staring: it was their last hour,
A madness of farewells. And Modred brought
His creatures to the basement of the tower
For testimony; and crying with full voice
"Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last,"
Aroused Lancelot, who, rushing outward lionlike
Leapt on him, and hurled him headlong, and he fell
Stunned, and his creatures took and bare him off,
And all was still.

Now Lancelot had offered to take the Queen to his castle over seas; but she refused, and took refuge in the convent of Almesbury, giving not her name, while he went back to his own land. And on this melancholy evening, when the mist "clung to the dead earth," as we have seen in the beginning of the poem, a rumour had reached the convent that Sir Modred had usurped the realm and leagued himself with the heathen, while the King was waging war on Lancelot; and the little maid, who had been wont to amuse Guinevere by her naïve garrulity, now so stung her by her frank comments on the wickedness of Lancelot and the Queen that Guinevere, thinking the Abbess and the nuns must have discovered her identity and set the child on out of malice to speak thus, angrily dismissed her. Then Guinevere passed into a reverie of the golden days in which she first saw Lancelot, until the sudden cry of "the King!" made her fall from her seat and grovel with her face against the floor.

There, with her milk-white arms and shadowy hair,
She made her face a darkness from the King,
And in the darkness heard his armèd feet
Pause by her; then came silence, then a voice,
Monotonous and hollow like a ghost's
Denouncing judgment, but tho' changed, the King's:
"Liest thou here so low, the child of one
I honoured, happy, dead before thy shame?
Well is it that no child is born of thee.
The children born of thee are sword and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking-up of laws,
The craft of kindred, and the godless hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern Sea.
And knowest thou now from whence I come—from him,
From waging war with Lancelot: and he,
That did not shun to smite me in worse way,
Had yet that grace of courtesy in him left,
He spared to lift his hand against the King.
But many more when Modred raised revolt,
Forgetful of their truth and fealty, clave
To Modred, and a remnant stays with me.
Bear with me for the last time while I show,
Even for thy sake, the sin which thou hast sinned.
I was the first of all the kings who drew
The knighthood-errant of this realm and all
The realms together under me, their Head,
In that fair Order of my Table Round.
I made them lay their hands in mine, and swear
To reverence the King, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their King;
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her
And worship her by years of noble deeds

Until they won her.
And all this throve
Until I wedded thee."
He paused, and in the pause she crept an inch
Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
Far off a solitary trumpet blew.
Then, waiting by the doors, the war-horse neighed
As at a friend's voice, and he spake again.
"Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes,
I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with thee—
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's; nay, they never were the King's.
I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; but yet I say
Let no man dream but that I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
We two may meet before high God and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine, and know
I am thine husband—Not a smaller soul,
Not Lancelot, nor another. Leave me that,
I charge thee, my last hope.
Farewell!"
And while she grovelled at his feet,
She felt the King's breath wander o'er her neck,
And in the darkness, o'er her fallen head,
Perceived the waving of his hands that blest.

And so the King left Guinevere—to fight the great battle in the West in which he must needs strike down his sister's son, and Modred's heathen allies, in which, too, he himself was doomed to meet death or some mysterious doom. But the Queen, overcome by her meeting with him, and repenting of her grievous sin, revealed herself to the Abbess and became one of the nuns. Thus she lived till the Abbess died.

Then she for her good deeds and her pure life,
And likewise for the high rank she had borne,
Was chosen Abbess there, and Abbess lived
For three brief years, and there, an Abbess, passed
To where, beyond these voices there is peace.

In Memoriam

I

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen Thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, Thy foot
Is on the skull which Thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And Thou hast made him: Thou art just.

As printed among the poet's works, "In Memoriam" is a poem of one hundred and thirty-one sections, with a prologue and an epilogue. In reality, it was written on different occasions over a period of some sixteen years. The poem is dedicated to the memory of his friend, Arthur Henry Hallam, a son of the historian, of whom, on account of his fine endowments, great things were expected, but who died suddenly at Vienna, on September 15, 1833, and was buried at Clevedon, on the Bristol Channel, January 3, 1834. Tennyson's grief at the loss of his

II.—In Grief's First Hour

Beginning thus, with a note of confident hope in the goodness and mercy of God, the poet asks himself whether he and his friend will live again, and continue in another life the friendship of this. He has been studying works of philosophy concerning the origin of the world and man, but from them he only comes to know that we cannot understand the inner mysteries of the world and life, and must be content with simple faith in God's mercy. Now he finds himself wandering sorrowfully in the street where his friend lived.

Dark house, by which once more I stand
  Here in the long unlovely street,
  Doors, where my heart was used to beat
So quickly, waiting for a hand,

'A hand that can be clasp'd no more—
  Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
  And like a guilty thing I creep
'At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away
  The noise of life begins again,
  And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day.

III.—The Last Journey of the Dead

"Every pleasant spot" where the friends had been in the habit of meeting now seems dark to him, and blank despair has for the moment driven hope and faith away. The poet's soul has now begun to feel with a new keenness in his grief, but his thoughts are again sweet and gentle when he contemplates the last journey of his dead friend over the seas to the quiet resting-place by the waters of the Severn.

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friend was so intense that for many years it exercised a constant influence on his life, turning his thoughts to the contemplation of man's destiny, and the effect of grief in purifying the mind of man. The sections are numbered in order here, but are not, of course, the same as those in the poem.

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
  Sailest the placid ocean-plains
  With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
  In vain: a favourable speed
  Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

I hear the noise about thy keel;
  I hear the bell struck in the night:
  I see the cabin window bright;
I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,
  And travell'd men from foreign lands;
  And letters unto trembling hands;
And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him: we have idle dreams;
  This look of quiet flatters thus
  Our home-bred fancies: O to us,
The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,
  That takes the sunshine and the rains,
  Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God;

Than if with thee the roaring wells
  Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine;
  And hand so often clasp'd in mine
Should toss with tangle and with shells

IV.—If the Lost Came Back

"Is this the end of all my care?" the poet asks himself when the body of his friend has been hidden in the dark grave. But in the depth of his grief his reason is not calm enough to answer

him, and he can only resign himself to his sorrow and to what time may teach him.

If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touch'd the land to-day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port;

And standing, muffled round with woe,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the plank,
And beckoning unto those they know;

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half divine;
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousand things of home;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had droop'd of late,
And he should sorrow o'er my state,
And marvel what possess'd my brain;

And I perceived no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his frame,
But found him all in all the same,
I should not feel it to be strange.

V.—The Influence of Nature

When he comes again to the grave of his friend, the very gentleness of the natural scenes has a soothing influence on his spirit, and he writes:

The Danube to the Severn gave
The darken'd heart that beats no more;
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills;
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,
When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
Is vocal in its wooded walls;
My deeper anguish also falls,
And I can speak a little then.

VI.—Memories of the Lost Friend

His grief is still a purely personal one, still of the old remembered days he sings:

The path by which we twain did go,
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,
Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,
From flower to flower, from snow to snow:

And we with singing cheer'd the way,
And, crown'd with all the season lent,
From April on to April went,
And glad at heart from May to May:

But where the path we walk'd began
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
As we descended following Hope,
There sat the Shadow fear'd of man;

Who broke our fair companionship,
And spread his mantle dark and cold,
And wrapt thee formless in the fold,
And dull'd the murmur on thy lip.

'And bore thee where I could not see
Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste;
And think that, somewhere in the waste,
The shadow sits and waits for me.

VII.—The Sacrifice of Love

In the presence of this "Shadow cloak'd from head to foot," "who keeps the keys of all the creeds," the poet begins to ponder more and more over the great mysteries of man's life and destiny. His thoughts of life, however, are still involved with memories of his friend.

I know that this was Life—the track
Whereon with equal feet we fared;
And then, as now, the day prepared
The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move
As light as carrier-birds in air;
I loved the weight I had to bear,
Because it needed help of Love:

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
When mighty Love would cleave in twain
The lading of a single pain,
And part it, giving half to him.

VIII.—The Lessons of Life

But from his personal feelings he begins to draw the real lessons of life, and as the wildness of despair gives place at length to calmer thoughts, he is able to contemplate his loss with greater resignation.

I envy not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer's woods.

I envy not the beast that takes
  His license in the field of time,
  Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
  The heart that never plighted troth,
  But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall,
  I feel it, when I sorrow most,
  'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

IX.—The Message of the Bells

And now, with the approach of Christmastide, and all its holy memories, new feelings of hope begin to dwell in that breast where, so recently, the wildness of sorrow and despair had reigned.

The time draws near the birth of Christ;
  The moon is hid, the night is still,
  The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
  From far and near, on mead and moor,
  Swell out and fall, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,
  That now dilate, and now decrease,
  Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
  I almost wish'd no more to wake,
  And that my hold on life would break
Before I heard those bells again;

But they my troubled spirit rule,
For they controlled me when a boy;
They bring me sorrow touch'd with joy,
The merry, merry bells of Yule.

X.—The Poet's Faith and Doubt

His faith in the promises of God, as revealed in the teachings of Jesus, is not yet absolute, and his mind is not without its doubts, but he has emerged from his darkest sorrow with the conviction that the grave is not the end of all.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else death is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is;

This round of green, this orb of flame,
Fantastic beauty; such as lurks
In some wild Poet, when he works
Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I?
'Twere hardly worth my while to choose
Of things all mortal, or to use
A little patience ere I die.

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,
Like birds the charming serpent draws,
To drop head-foremost in the jaws
Of vacant darkness and to cease.

XI.—Do the Departed Think of Us?

It is springtime again, and the poet, still singing his mournful songs, wonders whether the spirit of the departed takes any interest in the life on earth, and, if so, he cannot but think these songs of his will be grateful to the spirit's ear.

With weary steps I loiter on,
  Tho' always under alter'd skies
  The purple from the distance dies,
My prospects and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,
  The herald melodies of spring,
  But in the songs I love to sing
A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here
  Survive in spirits render'd free,
  Then are these songs I sing of thee
Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XII.—*The Purpose of all Life*

From this thought he goes on to speculate upon the life of the departed, and suggests that theirs is indeed the larger life, to which all the joys and sorrows and good and evil of this world are but the dim and bungling preparations.

Oh, yet we trust that somehow good
  Will be the final goal of ill,
  To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
  That not one life shall be destroyed,
  Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
  That not a moth with vain desire
  Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

XIII.—When Grief is Past

This is the wide and universal hope that has grown within the soul of the poet, as he has turned from his own sorrows to contemplate the sorrows of all mankind. He no longer doubts that God has created man not as the mere creature of a passing day, but as an inheritor of immortal life, and in the larger love of mankind finds a joy that outweighs the loss of friend.

Again at Christmas did we weave
  The holly round the Christmas hearth;
  The silent snow possess'd the earth
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve.

The Yule-log sparkled keen with frost,
  No wing of wind the region swept,
  But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
  Again our ancient games had place,
  The mimic picture's breathing grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who showed a token of distress?
  No single tear, no mark of pain:
  O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!
  No—mixt with all this mystic frame,
  Her deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry.

XIV.—Thoughts at the Coming of Spring

But, being uneasy at the thought that his sorrow for his friend has lessened, in the following song of spring the poet calls upon the warmer season of the year to thaw his frozen sorrow and let it flower again.

Dip down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new year delaying long;
Thou doest expectant Nature wrong,
Delaying long; delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,
Thy sweetness from its proper place?
Can trouble live with April days,
Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring foxglove spire,
The little speedwell's darling blue,
Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
Laburnums, drooping-wells of fire.

O thou, new year, delaying long,
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
That longs to burst a frozen bud
And flood a fresher throat with song.

XV.—What Might Have Been

And now his mind is back again with his friend, when he sings thus of what might have been.

When I contemplate all alone
The life that had been thine below,
And fix my thoughts on all the glow
To which thy crescent would have grown,

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,
A central warmth diffusing bliss
In glance and smile, and clasp and kiss,
On all the branches of thy blood;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine;
For now the day was drawing on,
When thou shouldst link thy life with one
Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled "Uncle" on my knee;
But that remorseless iron hour
Made cypress of her orange flower,
Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I see myself an honour'd guest,
Thy partner in the flowery walk
Of letters, genial table-talk,
Or deep dispute, and graceful jest;

While now thy prosperous labour fills
The lips of men with honest praise,
And sun by sun the happy days
Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair;
And all the train of bounteous hours
Conduct by paths of growing powers
To reverence and the silver hair;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,
Her lavish mission richly wrought,
Leaving great legacies of thought,
Thy spirit should fail from off the globe.

What time mine own might also flee,
  As link'd with thine in love and fate,
  And, hovering o'er the dolorous strait
To the other shore, involved in thee;

'Arrive at last the blessed goal,
  'And He that died in Holy Land
  Would reach us out the shining hand,
'And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?
  Ah, backward fancy, wherefore wake
  The old bitterness again, and break
The low beginnings of content.

XVI.—Familiar Scenes Revisited

Next he revisits Cambridge, where they had been at college together.

I passed beside the reverend walls
  In which of old I wore the gown;
  I roved at random thro' the town,
'And saw the tumult of the halls;

'And heard once more in college fanes
  The storm their high-built organs make,
  And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophets blazon'd on the panes;

'And caught once more the distant shout,
  The measured pulse of racing oars
  'Among the willows; paced the shores
'And many a bridge, and all about

The same grey flats again, and felt
  The same, but not the same; and last
  Up that long walk of limes I passed
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door:
I linger'd; all within was noise
Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys
That crash'd the glass, and beat the floor;

Where once we held debate, a band
Of youthful friends, on mind and art,
And labour, and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land;

When one would aim an arrow fair,
But send it slackly from the string;
And one would pierce an outer ring,
And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he,
Would cleave the mark. A willing ear
We lent him. Who but hung to hear
The rapt oration flowing free.

From point to point, with power and grace
And music in the bounds of law,
To those conclusions when we saw
The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly wise;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

XVII.—The Mingling of Joy and Regret

Through long mazes of the poem he recalls events in his friendship with his lost companion, but with a sentiment of joy now in his expressions of grief as he sings of the greater things of life and immortality, and a new spring finds him calm of mind and strong in faith.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
  Now burgeons every maze of quick
  About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland, loud and long,
  The distance takes a lovelier hue,
  And drown'd in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
  The flocks are whiter down the vale,
  And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
  In yonder greening gleam, and fly
  The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood; that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast
  Spring wakens too; and my regret
  Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

XVIII.—What Time has Taught the Poet

So at last the poet's personal grief has passed away. Time has taught him wisdom, and a confident hope in the reunion of friends in after life.

Is it, then, regret for buried time
  That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
  And meets the year, and gives and takes
The colours of the crescent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
  The life re-orient out of dust,
  Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret: the face will shine
  Upon me, while I muse alone;
  And that dear voice, I once have known,
Still speak to me of me and mine.

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
  For days of happy commune dead;
  Less yearning for the friendship fled,
Than some strong bond which is to be.

JAMES THOMSON

The City of Dreadful Night

I

THE City is of Night; perchance of Death,
But certainly of Night; for never there
Can come the lucid morning's fragrant breath
After the dewy dawning's cold grey air;
The moon and stars may shine with scorn or pity;
The sun has never visited that city,
For it dissolveth in the daylight fair.

Dissolveth like a dream of night away;
Though present in distempered gloom of thought
And deadly weariness of heart all day.
But when a dream night after night is brought
Throughout a week, and such weeks few or many,
Recur each year for several years, can any
Discern that dream from real life in aught?

James Thomson (who is not to be confounded with his fellow-Scot of the same name, the poet of "The Seasons") was born at Port Glasgow, Renfrewshire, on November 23, 1834. After being brought up in an orphan asylum, he was sent to Ireland as an assistant army schoolmaster, and while there fell ardently in love with the beautiful daughter of an armourer sergeant of the regiment. Her death two years later cast a gloom on Thomson's life from which he never properly recovered, and no doubt intensified that sombre imagination which he already had from his deeply religious mother. He now formed his first literary connection with Charles Bradlaugh, the famous English political freethinker, in whose journal, "The National Reformer," his best work appeared, including "To our Ladies of Death" in 1872 and "The City of Dreadful Night" in 1874. Between these dates he paid a visit to the western states of America, and subsequently to Spain as special correspondent for the New

The City is not ruinous, although
Great ruins of an unremembered past,
With others of a few short years ago
More sad, are found within its precincts vast.
The street lamps always burn, but scarce a casement
In house or palace front from roof to basement
Doth glow or gleam across the mirk air cast.

The street lamps burn amidst the baleful glooms,
Amidst the soundless solitudes immense
Of rangèd mansions dark and still as tombs.
The silence which benumbs or strains the sense
Fulfils with awe the soul's despair unweeping:
Myriads of habitants are ever sleeping,
Or dead, or fled, from nameless pestilence!

Mature men chiefly, few in age or youth,
A woman rarely, now and then a child:
A child! if here the heart turns sick with ruth
To see a little one from birth defiled,
Or lame, or blind, as preordained to languish
Through youthless life, think how it bleeds with anguish
To meet one erring in that homeless wild.

They often murmur to themselves, they speak
To one another seldom, for their woe
Broods maddening inwardly, and scorns to wreak
Itself abroad; and if at whiles it grow
To frenzy which must wake, none heeds the clamour,
Unless there waits some victim of like glamour,
To rave in turn, who lends attentive show.

York "World" with the Carlists, and on his return home his writings, both in prose and in verse, most of which appeared under the pseudonym of Bysshe Vanolis, or "B. V.," began to receive more attention. There were but few incidents, however, to relieve the settled gloom and poverty of his existence, save what he now sought for himself in drugs, and he died in London on June 3, 1882, leaving behind him a small body of work from which time has only more securely rescued the better part.

The City is of Night, but not of Sleep;
There sweet sleep is not for the weary brain;
The pitiless hours like years and ages creep,
A night seems termless hell. This dreadful strain
Of thought and consciousness which never ceases,
Of which some moments' stupour but increases,
This, more than woe, makes wretches there insane.

II

He stood alone within the spacious square
Declaiming from the central grassy mound,
With head uncovered and with streaming hair,
As if large multitudes were gathered round:
A stalwart shape, the gestures full of might,
The glances burning with unnatural light:

"As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: all was black,
In heaven no single star, on earth no track;
A brooding hush without a stir or note,
The air so thick it clotted in my throat;
And thus for hours; then some enormous things
Swooped past with savage cries and clanking wings:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

"As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: eyes of fire
Glared at me, throbbing with a starved desire;
The hoarse and heavy and carnivorous breath
Was hot upon me from deep jaws of death;
Sharp claws, swift talons, fleshless fingers cold
Plucked at me from the bushes, tried to hold:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: lo you, there,
That hillock burning with a brazen glare;
Those myriad dusky flames with points aglow
Which writhed and hissed and darted to and fro;
A Sabbath of the Serpents, heaped pell-mell
For Devil's roll-call and some *fête* of Hell:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: meteors ran
And crossed their javelins on the black sky-pan;
The zenith opened to a gulf of flame,
The dreadful thunderbolts jarred earth's fixed frame;
The ground all heaved in waves of fire that surged
And weltered round me sole there unsubmerged:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: air once more,
And I was close upon a wild seashore;
Enormous cliffs arose on either hand,
The deep tide thundered up a league-broad strand;
White foam-belts seethed there, wan spray swept and flew;
The sky broke, moon and stars and clouds and blue:
And I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: from the night
A shape came slowly with a ruddy light;
A woman with a red lamp in her hand,
Bare-headed and bare-footed on that strand;

O desolation moving with such grace!
O anguish with such beauty in thy face.
I fell as on my bier,
Hope travailed with such fear.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: I was twain,
Two selves distinct that cannot join again;
One stood apart, and knew, but could not stir,
And watched the other stark in swoon and her;
And she came on, and never turned aside,
Between such sun and moon and roaring tide:
And as she came more near
My soul grew mad with fear.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: hell is mild
And piteous matched with that accursed wild;
A large black sign was on her breast that bowed,
A broad black band ran down her snow-white shroud;
That lamp she held was her own burning heart,
Whose blood-drops trickled step by step apart;
The mystery was clear;
Mad rage had swallowed fear.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: by the sea
She knelt and bent above that senseless me;
Those lamp-drops fell upon my white brow there,
She tried to cleanse them with her tears and hair;
She murmured words of pity, love, and woe,
She needed not the level rushing flow:
And mad with rage and fear,
I stood stone-bound so near.

" As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: when the tide
Swept up to her there kneeling by my side,

She clasped that corpse-like me, and they were borne
Away, and this vile me was left forlorn;
I know the whole sea cannot quench that heart,
Or cleanse that brow, or wash those two apart:
They love; their doom is drear,
Yet they nor hope nor fear;
But I, what do I here?"

III

Large glooms were gathered in the mighty fane,
With tinted moon-gleams slanted here and there;
And all was hush: no swelling organ-strain,
No chant, no voice, or murmuring of prayer;
No priests came forth, no tinkling censers fumed,
And the high altar-space was unillumed.

All patiently awaited the event
Without a stir or sound, as if no less
Self-occupied, doom-stricken, while attent.
And then we heard a voice of solemn stress
From the dark pulpit, and our gaze there met
Two eyes which burned as never eyes burned yet.

Two steadfast and intolerable eyes
Burning beneath a broad and rugged brow;
The head behind it of enormous size.
And as black fir-groves in a large wind bow,
Our rooted congregation, gloom-arrayed,
By that great sad voice deep and full was swayed:—

"My heart is sick with anguish for your bale;
Your woe hath been my anguish; yea, I quail
And perish in your perishing unblest.
And I have searched the heights and depths, the scope
Of all our universe, with desperate hope
To find some solace for your wild unrest.

"And now at last authentic word I bring,
Witnessed by every dead and living thing;
Good tidings of great joy for you, for all:
This little life is all we must endure,
The grave's most holy peace is ever sure,
We fall asleep and never wake at all.

"We finish thus; and all our wretched race
Shall finish with its cycle, and give place
To other beings, with their own time-doom
Infinite aeons ere our kind began;
Infinite aeons after the last man
Has joined the mammoth in earth's tomb and womb.

"All substance lives and struggles evermore
Through countless shapes continually at war,
By countless interactions interknit:
If one is born a certain day on earth,
All times and forces tended to that birth,
Not all the world could change or hinder it.

"I find no hint throughout the Universe
Of good or ill, or blessing or of curse;
I find alone Necessity Supreme;
With infinite Mystery, abyssmal, dark,
Unlighted ever by the faintest spark,
For us the flitting shadows of a dream.

"O Burthen of sad lives! they are so brief;
A few short years must bring us all relief:
Can we not bear these years of labouring breath?
But if you would not this poor life fulfil,
Lo, you are free to end it when you will,
Without the fear of waking after death."

The organ-like vibrations of his voice
Thrilled through the vaulted aisles and died away;
The yearning of the tones which bade rejoice
Was sad and tender as a requiem lay:

Our shadowy congregation rested still
As brooding on that "End it when you will."

IV

I wandered in a suburb of the north,
And reached a spot whence three close lanes led down,
Beneath thick trees and hedgerows winding forth
Like deep brook-channels, deep and dark and lone:
The air above was wan with misty light,
The dull grey south showed one vague blur of white.

After a hundred steps I grew aware
Of something crawling in the lane below;
It seemed a wounded creature prostrate there
That sobbed with pangs in making progress slow,
The hind limbs stretched to push, the fore limbs then
To drag; for it would die in its own den.

But coming level with it I discerned
That it had been a man; for at my tread
It stopped in its sore travail, and half turned,
Leaning upon its right, and raised its head,
And with the left hand twitched back as in ire
Long grey unreverend locks befouled with mire.

A haggard filthy face with bloodshot eyes,
An infamy for manhood to behold.
He gasped all trembling, "What, you want my prize?
You leave, to rob me, wine and lust and gold
And all that men go mad upon, since you
Have traced my sacred secret of the clue?

"Did you but know my agony and toil!
Two lanes diverge up yonder from this lane;
My thin blood marks the long length of their soil;
Such clue I left, who sought my clue in vain:

My hands and knees are worn both flesh and bone;
I cannot move but with continual moan.

"But I am in the very way at last
To find the long-lost broken golden thread
Which reunites my present with my past,
If you but go your own way." And I said,
"I will retire as soon as you have told
Whereunto leadeth this lost thread of gold."

"And do you know it not!" he hissed with scorn;
"I feared you, imbecile! it leads me back
From this accursed night without a morn,
And through the deserts which have else no track,
And through vast wastes of horror-haunted crime,
To Eden innocence in Eden's prime."

He turned to grope; and I retiring brushed
Thin shreds of gossamer from off my face,
And mused, his life would grow, the germ uncrushed;
He should to ante-natal night retrace,
And hide his elements in that large womb
Beyond the reach of man—evolving doom.

And even thus, what weary way were planned,
To seek oblivion through the far-off gate
Of birth, when that of death is close at hand!
For this is law, if law there be in Fate:
What never has been, yet may have its when;
The thing which has been, never is again.

V

Anear the centre of that northern crest
Stands out a level upland bleak and bare,
From which the city east and south and west

Sinks gently in long waves; and thronèd there
An Image sits, stupendous, superhuman,
The bronze colossus of a wingèd Woman,
Upon a graded granite base, four-square.

Low seated, she leans forward massively,
With cheek on clenched left hand, the forearm's might
Erect, its elbow on her rounded knee;
Across a clasped book in her lap the right
Upholds a pair of compasses; she gazes
With full-set eyes, but wandering in thick mazes
Of sombre thought beholds no outward sight.

Words cannot picture her; but all men know
That solemn sketch the pure sad artist [1] wrought
Three centuries and three score years ago,
With phantasies of his peculiar thought:
The instruments of carpentry and science
Scattered about her feet, in strange alliance
With the keen wolfhound sleeping undistraught;

Scales, hourglass, bell, and magic-square above;
The grave and solid infant perched beside,
With open winglets that might bear a dove,
Intent upon its tablet, heavy-eyed;
Her folded wings, as of a mighty eagle,
But all too-impotent to lift the regal
Robustness of her earth-born strength and pride;

The comet hanging o'er the waste-dark seas,
The massy rainbow curved in front of it,
Beyond, the village with its mast and tree;
The snaky imp, dog-headed, from the Pit,
Bearing upon its bat-like leathern pinions
Her name unfolded in the sun's dominions,
The "MELANCHOLIA" that transcends all wit.

[1] Albert Dürer.

Thus has the artist copied her, and thus
Surrounded to expound her form sublime,
Her fate heroic and calamitous;
Fronting the dreadful mysteries of Time,
Unvanquished in defeat and desolation,
Undaunted in the hopeless conflagration
Of the day setting on her baffled prime.

Baffled and beaten back she works on still,
Weary and sick of soul she works the more,
Sustained by her indomitable will:
The hands shall fashion and the brain shall pore
And all her sorrow shall be turned to labour
Till death the friend-foe piercing with his sabre
That mighty heart of hearts ends bitter war.

But as if blacker night could dawn on night,
With tenfold gloom on moonless night unstarred,
A sense more tragic than defeat and light,
More desperate than strife with hope debarred,
More fatal than the adamantine Never
Encompassing her passionate endeavour,
Dawns glooming in her tenebrous regard:

The sense that every struggle brings defeat,
Because Fate holds no prize to crown success;
That all the oracles are dumb or cheat,
Because they have no secret to express;
That none can pierce the vast black veil uncertain,
Because there is no light behind the curtain;
That all is vanity and nothingness.

Titanic from her high throne in the north
That City's sombre Patroness and Queen,
In bronze sublimity she gazes forth

Over her capital of teen and threne,
Over the river with its isles and bridges,
The marsh and moorland, to the stern rock-ridges,
Confronting them with a coëval mien.

The moving moon and stars from east to west
Circle before her in the sea of air;
Shadows and gleams glide round her solemn rest.
Her subjects often gaze up to her there:
The strong to drink new strength of iron endurance,
The weak new terrors: all, renewed assurance
And confirmation of the old despair.

RICHARD WAGNER

The Nibelungen Ring

Rheingold

Scene I

At the bottom of the Rhine, the Rhine maidens, Flosshilde, Woglinde, *and* Wellgunde *are playing. From a dark chasm,* Alberic *clambers up one of the rocks.*

Alberic: Ho! ho! the nixies!
Are ye not nimble,
nice to behold?
From Nibelheim's night
now would I fain
approach, if ye be kind.

Wog. & Wel. Faugh! the ugly brute!

Wilhelm Richard Wagner, the greatest of modern musical composers, was born at Leipsic on May 22, 1813. His stepfather, Ludwig Geyer, an actor, wished to make a painter of him, but Wagner's first passion was for poetry, and at the age of thirteen he had translated the first twelve books of the "Odyssey" for his own amusement. This literary aptitude, which time only served to enhance, added a further lustre to his musical genius, and had the most practical results in the fact that he wrote all the poems and libretti for his own operas, namely, "Rienzi" (1842), "The Flying Dutchman" (1843), "Tannhäuser" (1845), "Lohengrin" (1848–58), "Tristan und Isolde" (1865), "Die Meistersinger" (1867–68), etc. The ill reception which Wagner's tremendous musical reforms encountered combined with his own passionately aggressive attitude toward his critics and the public to make his career a stormy one, and on account of his share in the political revolution of 1849, he was compelled to abandon his position of Hofkapellmaster at Dresden, and lived for ten years thereafter in strict retirement at Zurich in Switzerland. It was during this period that, besides a series of books on musical criticism which he

FLOSS.: Look to the Gold!
Father warned us
from such a foe.

ALB.: How sweet and soft
in this light ye seem!
Gladly I'd seek
to encircle one of your waists.

FLOSS.: I laugh at our fears;
the foe is in love.

[ALBERIC *attempts to make love to each in turn. They pretend to accept his advances, and then repulse him. He becomes enraged. Through the water above breaks a blinding yellow gleam.*

WOG.: Look, sisters!
The awakener laughs in the deep.

ALL THREE (*Swimming joyously around the central rock*):
Rheingold! Rheingold!
Lustrous delight!
Thou laughest in radiance rare!
Glistening gleams
Outglow from thee wide o'er the waves.

ALB.: What is't, ye gliders,
That there doth gleam and glow?

ALL THREE: Ugly one, where is your home,
if of Rheingold you never have heard?

---

gave to the world, he also found time to compose the entire text and part of the music of his famous "Nibelungen Ring," a tetralogy of four operas founded on the Norse and German myths of the Nibelungenlied (see p. 38). In 1876 Wagner at last realized the dream of his life, by the festival performance of the "Ring" inaugurating his own opera house at Bayreuth, where in 1882 his last work, "Parsifal," was also performed. The unfailing aid and encouragement which he received all through his struggles from his friend, the composer Liszt, whose daughter Cosima he afterwards married, is a detail which can scarcely be omitted from any mention of his life. Wagner died in Venice on February 13, 1882. The "Rheingold" forms the introductory portion to the remaining trilogy of the "Walküre," "Siegfried," and "Götterdämmerung."

WOG.: The golden prize
precious you'd deem
wist you but all of its wonder.

WEL.: The world's kingdom
He can encompass
who from the Rheingold
shapeth the Ring,
which measureless might can secure.

WOG.: But he who passion's
power forswears
and from delights
of Love forbears
He alone the Magic commandeth
The Gold to mould into a Ring.

ALB.: The World's kingdom
at once could I compass through this?
If Love is denied me
a ruder delight may I know.
[*He clambers hastily up the central rock.*
Fear ye not now?
Then fondle in darkness!
The light's lustre I quench
and rend the gold from the rock,
Vengeance to wreck with a Ring:
Love I forswear for ever!

[*He tears the Gold from the rock and disappears. Sudden darkness. Curtain.*

SCENE II

Morning. A mountain top: standing on a cliff is a castle, with glittering pinnacles. WOTAN *and* FRICKA *asleep.* FRICKA *awakes and shakes* WOTAN.
Arise, now, spouse, and arouse thee!
[WOTAN *wakes and sees the castle.*
'Tis ended, the infinite work!
A heavenly mansion on mountain heights:
Grand and glorious pile!

FRICKA: Though fair thy tower,
I tremble for Freia.
Mindless one, pause and remember
the stated price to be paid!

WOTAN: I mind well all the demanded,
my men who built me this keep.
It prospers, thanks to their prowess:
for the price have thou no heed!

FRICKA: So without shame
Ye shrink not to forfeit
Freia, my glorious sister,
for this scandalous cause?

WOTAN: I'll let not our fairest
Freia be taken:
My thoughts never turned to such a thing.

FREIA (*enters hastily*):
Help me, Fricka!
Fail me not, Father!
From mountain fastness
Fasolt comes surely to catch me.

WOTAN: Loki advised this agreement,
and vowed to extricate Freia:
On him I firmly rely.
[*Enter* FASOLT *and* FAFNER, *two giants.*

FAS.: High with dome,
donjon, door,
we have formed
A fortress fair and fast.
Now pay our wage!
Freia the holy—
Holda, the free one
Agreed it is
She goes with us home.

WOTAN: Other guerdon ask:
Freia I must refuse.

FAS.: What sayest thou,—ha?
seekest to betray?

Betray a contract?
Serve but for sport
Those compelling runes of power
On thy spear writ?

WOTAN: How sly, to take for truth
what only in sport we had settled;
The beauteous goddess
Light and bright
What use to you are her charms?

[*Enter* LOKI.

'Ah, now, Loki,
Hastest thou so
When thou shouldst straighten
the sorry bargain thou struck'st?

LOKI: Alone for thy sake
I stormily strove
To the ends of the earth
To seek for Freia a substitute
which for the giants were just.
I now see full well
In the world around,
Nought is so rare
'As woman's wonderful worth.
Yet one I met with
Had made 'gainst love his oath;
for ruddy Gold
bereft him of woman's grace.
The Nibelung,
Night-Alberic,
failed from the Rhein-maids
amorous favours to gain:
The Rheingold he
robbed in his raging revenge.
Alberic conquered
the potent spell
And rightly fashioned the Ring.
Placed were all of us

in his power
Were not the Ring from him ravished.

FAF.: Hear, Wotan,
Our hasty last words:
Free from our hands be Freia:
us rough giants contenteth
the red Gold of the Nibelung.

FAS. (*seizing* FREIA):
Come here, maid!
With us remain
In pledge art thou placed
till our forfeit be paid.

[FREIA *is borne off hastily by the giants. A pale mist fills the stage. The gods take on an aged and haggard appearance.*

FRICKA: Woe's me! woe's me!
What is it all?

DONNER: My hand doth sink!

FROH: My heart doth stop!

LOKI: The golden apples
From Freia's garden
Preserved you from dwindling with age:
If without apples,
Old and grim, grey and gruesome,
Waning to sport of the world,
The stock of gods would cease.

WOTAN: Up, Loki! away with me
Beneath to the home of the Nibelungs!
I'll surely seize on this gold. [*Curtain.*

SCENE III

A subterranean cavern. ALBERIC *enters, dragging* MIME *by the ear, shrieking, and compels him to surrender a magic helmet which he has just made.*

ALB.: You, idiot, would seek
To save the wonderful
work for yourself.

[*Sets it on his head.*

Now, will it act as it ought?
Night annul me!
Nought be seen!

[*He vanishes.*

Brother, do you see me?

MIME (*astonished*):
I see you not!

ALB.: Then feel me instead.
You faithless scamp!

[MIME *writhes and yells under invisible blows.*

ALB. (*laughing*): I thank, you, blockhead:
The work is well performed.

[*Howls and cries heard as* ALBERIC *retreats. Enter* WOTAN *and* LOKI.

LOKI: What whining whimperer's here?

MIME: Leave me in quiet!

LOKI: That will I gladly,
and more yet, Mime:
Help will I give you.

MIME: What help for me?
Lately Alberic
hath wrought from Rheingold
a yellow Ring,
And its spell of magic
masters our spirits.
This wretch now compels us
without peace or pause
to heap up a hoard for him.
But who are ye?

LOKI: Friends to you;
from all their troubles
We'll free all the Nibelung folk.

[*Enter* ALBERIC, *driving a crowd of Nibelungs, laden with gold and silver. Having piled this in a heap, they and* MIME *are driven off to get more.* ALBERIC *perceives* WOTAN *and* LOKI.

ALB.: What want you here?
WOTAN: From Nibelheim's night-bound land
Strange news to our notice came,
Of rarest wonders
worked here by Alberic.
To witness these marvels
we are guests at thy gate.
ALB.: Beware! beware!
For soon ye men
shall work to my might!
Beware of the night-begot host!
LOKI: What if in sleep
a thief to you slipped
The Ring slyly to wrest?
What, wise one, would warrant you then?
ALB.: The helm that hides
Myself I designed:
Swiftly to waft me,
Or, at my will,
To assume other semblance.
So, undisturbed,
By aught I stand safe.
LOKI: This work without fellow
I cannot believe.
Till it be proved, I doubt, Dwarf, thy word.
ALB.: Now say, then, what shape
shall my figure assume?
LOKI: Whatever you will.
[ALBERIC *puts on helm.*
ALB.: Come thou here,
Mightiest dragon.
[*In his place immediately appears a dragon.*
ALB. (*reappearing in his proper form*):
Ha! ha! do you believe now?
LOKI: My trembling surely attests it
Well I credit the wonder.
But as you waxed great

Can you not become smaller?
More cunning, it seems to me,
From danger so to withdraw.

ALB.: Pah! nought simpler!
Look at me now. [*Puts on helm again.*
Crooked Toad
Creep from cranny.

[*He appears as a toad.* WOTAN *instantly sets his foot on it and* LOKI *seizes the tarn-helm.* ALBERIC *thereupon returns to his own shape, writhing under* WOTAN'S *foot. They bind him, and drag him off struggling furiously.* [*Curtain.*

SCENE IV

A mountain top. Enter WOTAN *and* LOKI, *dragging* ALBERIC *tightly bound. They compel him to make the gnomes bring all the hoarded gold and silver, and finally to surrender the Ring, and then release him.*

ALB. (*screaming*): As at first by my curse thou wast made,
Henceforth be cursed, thou Ring!
Now may thy magic
Deal each owner death!
To gladden no life
Shall thy lustre gleam!
Aye the murderer's brand thou shalt bring.
To death he is fated
Though long he live,
The jewel's lord
And the jewel's slave,
Till within my hand
I in triumph once more behold it!

[*Exit, screaming horribly.* FRICKA, DONNER, *and* FROH *enter on one side.*

FAS.: To lose the maiden
Look you, you will make me forlorn:
So, from my soul to unseat her,
Be the sparkling horde
Heaped in a stack
So as to hide
The heavenly maid from my sight.

[LOKI *and* FROH *build the treasure all around* FREIA.

FAF.: Still shines on me Holda's hair!
Throw me that woven
work on the heap!

LOKI: What! the tarn-helm?

WOTAN: Let it go freely!

FAS.: Her eyes like stars—
Yes, I can spy them
Still through this space.

FAS.: That chink must be hidden!
On Wotan's finger
Gleams a glittering ring:
Give that, to fill up the fissure!

WOTAN: Make demand as you will,
All I'll award you;
But the whole world
Moves not this ring from my hand!

FAS.: All's off, then!
And Freia's forfeit for ever!

[*All the gods do their utmost to persuade him to give up the Ring.*

WOTAN: Leave me at rest,
The ring I retain!

[*Suddenly the stage grows dark, and* ERDA *arises.*

ERDA: Waver, Wotan, waver!
Quit the Ring accursed.
Ruin and dismal downfall
Wait thee in its wealth.

WOTAN: Who art thou, threatening wight!

ERDA: Whatever was, wot I,

What is, as well,
What ages shall work
All I show.
The endless world's all-wise one,
Erda, opens thine eyes.
Hear me! hear me! hear me!
All that exists, endeth!
A dismal day
Dawns for the Gods:
I conjure you, render the ring!

[*She sinks slowly to the ground. After a pause, absorbed in deep thought*

WOTAN: Return, Freia,
I set thee free,
Purchased again
Gladly in youth we rejoice.
Ye giants, there is your ring.

[*The Giants at once begin to quarrel about the division of the treasure.* FASOLT *wrests the Ring from* FAFNER, *who fells him to the ground, tears the Ring from his dying hand, and makes off with the booty. All the Gods stand horrified.*

WOTAN: Fearful power
I find in the fatal curse.
Follow me, wife,
In Walhalla abide with me.

[*As the Gods depart, the song of the Rhinemaidens is heard:*

Rheingold, rarest gold!
For thee, our plaything
Now implore we:
Give us our gold!
Oh, give us our glory again.

[*Still singing as the Curtain falls.*

The Valkyrie

Scene I

The interior of a dwelling-place: in the centre stands the stem of a mighty Ash tree. Enter Siegmund, *exhausted.*

S'mund: Who e'er owns this hearth,
Here I must rest me. [*Enter* Sieglinde.

S'linde[1]: Who lies on the hearth?
Valiant he is, methinks,
Though there he lies so worn.

S'mund: Mine eyes are gladdened
By blissful rapture of sight:
Who is't that gladdens them so?

S'linde: Sieglinde.
This house and wife
Call Hunding owner.

S'mund: Weaponless am I:
A wounded guest
Will thy husband make welcome?
Ne'er from foe have I fled
But in splinters were spear and shield.

S'linde: A quickening draught
Of honey'd mead
May'st thou not scorn from me.

S'mund: Wilt thou but taste it first?

S'linde: Ill fate thou canst not bring
Where ill fate makes its home.
[*Enter* Hunding.

S'linde: Faint on the hearth
Found I this man.

H'ding: Sacred is my hearth!
Guest, now grant me a grace,
And make known thy name to me.

[1] Or Sieglind.

S'MUND: "Friedmund," may I not call me:
"Frohwalt" would that I were:
"Wehwalt" so I must name me.
"Wolfe" I called my father;
Alone I was not born,
For a sister twinned with me.
Her who with me was born
Scarce have I ever beheld.
To ashes was burnt
Our goodly abode,
Struck dead was the mother's
Valorous form,
And lost in the ruins
The sister's trace.
The Neiding's cruel host
Dealt us this deadly blow.
Unfriended fled
My father with me;
The stripling lived on;
With Wolfe in woodland wild.
A fiery onset on us
Did the Neiding's host begin.
Like chaff we scattered the foes,
Yet torn from my father was I.

H'DING: I know. A riotous race,
Not holy it holds
What men revere;
'Tis hated by all, and by me.
For vengeance, forth I was summoned,
payment to win me
for kinsmen's blood:
too late came I
and now return home,
the flying outcast's trace
to find again in my house.
My house holds thee,
Wolfing, to-day;

for the night, safe be thy rest:
With trusty weapon
defend thee to-morrow.
As debt death pay'st thou thy life.
(*to* S'LINDE) My nightdraught set me within
And wait thou there for me.
[*Goes into bedchamber, and bolts door within.*

S'MUND: A sword my father foretold me
Should serve me in sorest need.
Walse! Walse!
Where is thy sword?
That in fight shall serve me?
[*Enter* S'LINDE *in a white garment.*

S'LINDE: In deepest sleep lies Hunding
O'ercome by a slumbrous draught:
Now in the night, save thy life.

S'MUND: Thy coming is life!

S'LINDE: Oh, heed thou well what I tell thee.
The kinsmen gathered here
To honour the wedding of Hunding:
The woman he chose,
By him unwooed,
Miscreants gave him to wife.
A stranger entered the hall:
On me glancing,
He glared at the others.
A sword he swung in his hands,
Which then he struck
In the ash-tree stem;
To the hilt buried it lies.
But one man might win the weapon,
He who could draw it forth:
Of all the heroes,
Though bravely they laboured,
Not one the weapon could win.
Then I knew who he was
Who in sorrow greeted me:

I know, too, who only
Shall draw the sword from the stem.
Regained were then
All I had lost,
And won, too, were then
All I had wept for—
Found the delivering friend,
My hero, held in my arms.

S'MUND (*ardently embracing her*):
Thee, woman most blest,
Holdst now the friend
For weapon and wife decreed:
Hot in my breast
Burns now the oath
That weds me ever to thee.

S'LINDE: A marvel wakes my remembrance:
My eyes beheld thee of old,
Whom first I saw to-day.
(*pausing*) Wehwalt art thou in truth?

S'MUND: Ne'er call me so,
Since thou art mine!
Call me thyself
As thou wouldst I were called.

S'LINDE: Yet calledst thou Wolfe thy father?

S'MUND: Wolfe was he to fearful foes
But he of old
Walse was named

S'LINDE: Was Walse thy father,
And art thou a Walsung?
Struck was for thee
The sword in the tree.
So let me name thee
As I have loved thee:
"Siegmund"—so name I thee!

S'MUND: Siegmund call me,
For Siegmund am I!
Be witness this sword

I hold now undaunted!
Nothung! Nothung!
So name I thee, sword!
Nothung! Nothung!
Conquering steel!

[*With a tremendous effort, he pulls from the Ash-tree the sword which was sticking in the trunk.*

S'MUND: Far from here follow me now,
Forth to the laughing house of the Spring;
Bride and sister
Be to thy brother,
Then flourish the Walsungs for aye!

[*He clasps her passionately. Curtain.*

SCENE II

A wild, rocky place. WOTAN *and* BRUNNHILDE, *both fully armed.*

WOTAN: Brunnhilde, haste to the fray,
To shield the Walsung in fight!
Then let Hunding go
Where he belongs:
In Walhall I want him not.

[*Enter* FRICKA, *in a car drawn by two rams.*

WOTAN (*seeing her*): What troubles Fricka?

FRICKA: I have heard Hunding's cry,
For vengeance called he on me
And wedlock's guardian
Gave ear to him.
I made oath to punish the deed
Of this infamous pair.

WOTAN: Whatso evil wrought the pair?
I rule not where love doth reign!

FRICKA: Deemest thou praiseworthy
Wedlock's breach?
Was it ere known

That brother and sister were lovers?
Since thou begott'st
The riotous Walsungs
Shall in my shame
The basest one scorn me?

WOTAN: What demandest thou?

FRICKA: Shield not the Walsung!

WOTAN: I—shelter him not.

FRICKA: Seek not to trick me;
The Valkyrie too turn from him!

WOTAN: The Valkyrie free shall choose.

FRICKA: Not so, for alone
Thy command they obey:
Give orders that Siegmund may fall.

WOTAN: I cannot o'verthrow him,
He found my sword.

FRICKA: Destroy, then, its magic,
Be shattered the steel!
The Walsung now falls from my honour:
Doth Wotan now pledge me his oath?

WOTAN (*in deep dejection*):
Take my oath!
[FRICKA *drives quickly away.*

BRUNN.: Tell me what task must be mine.

WOTAN: Fight truly for Fricka,
Ward for her wedlock's oath.

BRUNN.: Ah, repent; take back thy word!
Thou lovest Siegmund.
To serve thee, safe will I shield him.

WOTAN: Siegmund shalt thou vanquish,
And Hunding as victor shall strike.

BRUNN.: He whom thou still
Has taught me to love,
For his sake now thy wavering
Word I defy!

WOTAN.: Darest thou! floutest thou me!
Who art thou but the fettered

Blind slave of my will?
I warn thee, then,
Wake not my wrath!
With heed fulfil my behest:
Siegmund strike thou!
Such be the Valkyrie's task.

[*Exit* WOTAN. SIEGMUND *and* SIEGLINDE *appear on the pass.* BRUNNHILDE *conceals herself.*

S'LINDE: Hark! the horn calls!
Hunding has wakened.
Kinsmen and bloodhounds
Calls he together.
Dogs are howling,
Loud baying to heaven
'gainst breaking of wedlock's oath.

[*She sinks senseless into* SIEGMUND'S *arms.*

BRUNN. (*advancing*): Siegmund
Look on me!
I come to call thee hence;
Death doomed is he who looks on me.
On the warfield alone
I come to heroes,
Those whom I greet
With me needs must go hence.
To Walhall follow thou me;
His father there will a Walsung find.

S'MUND: Yet one thing tell me, immortal!
Shall there Siegmund see Sieglinde?

BRUNN.: Here on earth
Must she still linger.

S'MUND: Then greet for me Walhall,
Greet for me Wotan,
Greet for me Walse:
To them I follow thee not.
Where Sieglinde lives, in weal or woe,
There, too, will Siegmund linger.

BRUNN.: While life is thine
Force were in vain:
But death shall vanquish thee, fool.
He who bestowed the sword
Sends thee now death,
For the spell he takes from the sword.

S'MUND: If death be my doom
I will slay the slumberer here.
Two lives now
Laugh to thee, Nothung!
Take them, Nothung,
Coveted steel!

BRUNN.: Forbear, Walsung! hearken to me:
Sieglinde shall live then,
And Siegmund, live thou with her.
Trust to the sword
And strike without fear:
Sure striketh the blade
As the Valkyrie's shield is sure.

[*Exit.* *Enter* HUNDING.

H'DING: Wehwalt! Wehwalt!
Stand and fight!

[*They fight.* *A light breaks through the clouds, in which* WOTAN *appears holding his spear.*

WOTAN: Go back from the spear
In splinters, thou sword!

[SIEGMUND'S *sword breaks in fragments.* HUNDING *pierces him to the heart.*

WOTAN (*to* H'DING): Go hence, slave!
Kneel before Fricka:
Tell her that Wotan's spear
Avenged what wrought her wrong.

[HUNDING *sinks dead on the ground.* BRUNNHILDE *seizes* SIEGLINDE'S *form and flies off on a horse.*

Scene III

The summit of a rocky mountain. Eight Valkyrie are assembled. Brunnhilde *comes, bearing* Sieglinde.

Brunn.: Shield me and help
In direst need!
All-father follows close.

The Val. (*terrified*):
Hast lost thy senses?
Doth Wotan pursue *thee?*

Brunn.: Shield me, sisters!
Woe to this wife
If the God find her here!
For all of the Walsungs
Dooms he to downfall.

S'linde: Let sorrow not vex thee for me:
Only death is my due!
Now hearken, maid, to my prayers:
Thrust thy sword into my heart!

Brunn.: Live still, O woman,
For love doth call thee.
Redeem the pledge
That from him thou'st won:
A Walsung's life thou dost bear.

S'linde: Rescue me, brave ones!
Rescue my child!

Brunn.: Away, then, fly swiftly!
And fly thou alone!
I—stay in thy stead,
While thou from his vengeance escapest.

Siegrune: A forest wild spreads
Far to the east:
The Nibelungs' hoard
By Fafner thither was borne.

Valtraute: There as a dread
Dragon he dwelleth,

And in a cave there
Guardeth he Alberic's Ring.

BRUNN.: And yet from Wotan's wrath
Shelter safe were the wood
Our Father feareth
And shunneth the place.
Fly thee swiftly!
Bold in defiance,
Endure every ill!
For one thing know,
And hold it ever;
The world's most glorious hero
thou bearest, O woman.

[*She hands her the fragments of the sword.*

For him guard well
The mighty splinters;
His name from me let him take,
"Siegfried" in triumph shall live.

[SIEGLINDE *hastens off. Enter, in terrible wrath,* WOTAN.

WOTAN: Where is Brunnhilde?
Where the rebellious one?

BRUNN.: Here am I, father:
Pronounce now my sentence.

WOTAN: Valkyrie once thou wert called:—
What now thou art
Henceforth shalt thou be!
The heavenly host
No more shall know thee;
Outcast art thou
From the clan of the Gods:
He who wins, robs thee of all,
For here on the rock
Bound shalt thou be;
Defenceless in sleep,
Lock'd shalt thou lie:

The man shall master the maid
Who shall find her, and wake her from [sleep.

THE VAL.: Recall the curse!
O, Father, repent!

WOTAN: The will of her master
She now shall obey!

BRUNN.: If fetters of sleep
Fast shall bind me,
For basest craven and easy booty;
This one thing must thou grant me
In deepest grief I pray:
That but the first, most fearless
Of heroes e'er shall find me.
By thy command
Kindle a fire,
With flaming guardians engird the fell!

WOTAN: Farewell, thou valiant,
Glorious child!
Thou, once the holiest,
Pride of my heart!
Thou laughing delight of my eyes!
Such a bridal fire
For thee shall be kindled
As ne'er yet has burned for a bride.

[BRUNNHILDE *sinks into sleep.* WOTAN *waves his spear. Fire springs up and encircles the rock.*

WOTAN: He whom my spear points'
Sharpness feareth,
Shall cross not the flaming fire.

[*Curtain.*

Siegfried

Scene I

Mime's *cave in a forest. An anvil and forge.* Mime, *a Nibelung, forging a sword.*

Mime: The stoutest sword
That ever I shaped,
In a giant's fingers
Firm it were found:
But he whom 'tis forged for
Will strain and twist it in two
As 'twere a straw or a toy.
Nothung's fragments
He'd fracture me never
Could I but mend
The mighty metal,
But all my craft
Cannot compass that.
Siegfried's prowess unproved
May master e'en Fafner's might:
The Nibelung Ring
Would belong then to me.
For this may serve but one sword;
Now naught but "Nothung" I need.
[*To* Siegfried, *who has just entered:*
I've shaped the weapon sharp,
With its sheen thou wilt be well pleased.

S'fried: Hey! what an idle
Toy is this!
This silly switch
Call you a sword?
[*He beats it to pieces on the anvil.*
There hast thou the splinters!
Would I had smashed it
Over your skull!

MIME: What gross ingratitude!
This overbearing boy,
If he gets not *all* the best,
The good things I have given
Are each and all forgot.
A querulous brat
Kindly I reared;
Wrapped in warm linen
The little wretch;
Water and food
For thee I found,
Looked upon thee
As my very life.

S'FRIED: How came you then
By this clamouring wretch?

MIME: Only trust
Whatever I tell thee:
I am thy father and mother in one.

S'FRIED: You lie, perfidious fool!
A fish ne'er had toad for father!
Now shall I make you inform me
What father and mother are mine.

[*Seizes him by the throat and half chokes him.*

MIME: Let loose! what thou wishest to learn
I'll tell thee, as far as I know.
A poor woman lay wailing
Once in yon woodland wild;
I helped her home to this hole,
And gave my hearth for a haven.
Sad was her lot: she died,
But Siegfried saw the light.

S'FRIED: And how was my father named?

MIME: That someone slew him,
She said, and no more.
A querulous brat
Kindly I reared. . . .

S'FRIED: Silence that endless
Starling note!
Shall I believe your tidings?
Then let me see a sign.

[MIME *produces the fragments of the sword Nothung.*

MIME: 'Twas this your mother gave me
For food and cost and toil;
See here: a broken sword!
She said thy father bore it
In the fight when he was slain.

S'FRIED: And these same fragments
You now shall forge for me.

[*He rushes off into the woods. Enter* WOTAN *in the simple disguise of a Wanderer.*

WOTAN: Hail, wisest smith!

MIME: By whom in this woodland
Wild am I sought?

WOTAN: "Wanderer" calls me the world:
All the earth round
I roam at my will.

MIME: Then roam on thy way,
And rest thee not here.

WOTAN (*seating himself at the hearth*):
Here gaining thy hearth
I gage thee my head
'As stake in a struggle of wits.

MIME: Thy head staking against my hearth!
Three the questions that I require:
Now tell me aright
What is the race
Born in the bowels of earth?

WOTAN: In the bowels of earth
Burrow the Nibelungs:
Nibelheim is their land.

MIME: Now say to me sooth
What is the race
That lives on earth's back?

WOTAN: The back of the earth
The giants inhabit:
Riesenheim is their land.
MIME: Now tell me as well
What is the race
Guards the welkin above?
WOTAN: The Welkin above
The Gods inhabit:
Walhalla their dwelling.
What thy welfare concerns,
That shouldst thou have sought,
Holding my head in pledge.
Since thou hast not asked
To thy profit
I will have thy head also as gauge.
Now first let me ask you
What is that noble race
That Wotan so ruthlessly treated,
And that yet he holds most dear?
MIME: The Walsung are they,
The race Wotan fathered:
Siegfried is their son.
WOTAN: Now a wily Nibelung
Wardeth Siegfried,
Fated slayer of Fafner:
But what sword
Must Siegfried wield
Accomplishing Fafner's death?
MIME: "Nothung" the name
Of the needful sword.
WOTAN: Who will, from the stubborn splinters,
"Nothung" the sword remake?
MIME: The fragments? The sword?
Alas! it escapes me.
'Tis far too hard
To yield to my hammer.
Who shapeth the sword

Since I cannot?
How can I master this marvel?

WOTAN: None but he who fear
Hath never felt
Makes "Nothung" new.
(*rising*) Thy head so wise
Henceforth guard well:
I leave it forfeit to him
Who hath not yet learnt to fear.
[*Turns away laughing, and disappears.*

S'FRIED (*calls from without*):
Ho! lazy fellow,
Aren't you yet ready?
Quick, how goes't with the sword?

MIME: The sword! the sword!
How can I shape it?
How can I awake in him fear?

S'FRIED (*entering*): What mean you by fear?

MIME: What profits the mightiest sword
When fear stays far from thee?

S'FRIED: If 'tis an art,
Why was I not taught?
Say then, what is this "fear"?

MIME: I wot of a monstrous Worm,
Who's slain full many a man:
Fafner will teach thee fear;
Follow thou me to his lair.

S'FRIED: Thither then thou shalt'st lead me
To learn about fear.
Now swift shape me the sword!
In the world I will wield it.

MIME: Accursed steel!
I cannot restore it again.

S'FRIED: Bring me the fragments!
My father's sword
Fails not with me.
Myself I'll forge the sword.

[*He grinds the fragments to powder and places them in a crucible on the forge.*

Ho! ho! Mime, now say,
How named they the sword?

MIME: "Nothung" named
Is the notable sword.

S'FRIED: "Nothung"! "Nothung"!
Notable sword!
Why wert thou thus dissevered?
To shreds I've shattered
Thy shining blade.
I've melted the steely shreds,
I soon shall hail thee "my sword."

MIME (*aside*): Wearied in fight with the worm,
In his faintness fain he will drink.
From potent simples
I'll brew a draught:
Senseless he'll sink to sleep.
With the very weapon
He there is welding
He shall be razed from my way.
The Ring and the hoard I will own.

SCENE II

A deep forest. The opening of a cave. Enter MIME *and* SIEGFRIED.

S'FRIED: Here shall I in fear take lessons?

MIME: Seest thou yonder cavern shade?
Therein dwells
A gruesome, savage worm.

S'FRIED: "Nothung" straightway
I'll strike to his heart;
Will that be called Fear, belike?

[*Exit* MIME. SIEGFRIED *blows a call on his horn.* FAFNER *enters, in the form of a huge dragon.* SIEGFRIED *attacks him, and, after a prolonged struggle,*

pierces him through the heart. As he dies, FAFNER *says:*

FAFNER: Bear thou good heed,
Thou budding hero!
Treason encircles
Him who holds the hoard.
One who showed thee this deed
Encompasses surely thy death.

[FAFNER *rolls over on his side dead. As* SIEGFRIED *withdraws the sword, his hand becomes smeared with blood. Putting his fingers to his mouth to suck off the blood, he becomes at once able to understand the voices of the birds.*

VOICE OF WOODBIRD: Hey! Siegfried doth hold
Now the Nibelungs' hoard:
O deep in the hole
The hoard is hidden.

S'FRIED: Thank you, dear birdlet,
For thine advice.

[*He goes into the cavern, reappearing with the Ring, and the Tarnhelm.*

WOODBIRD: Hey! Siegfried doth hold
Now the helm and the Ring!
Oh trust not Mime,
The treacherous elf.

[*Re-enter* MIME. *Through* SIEGFRIED'S *power* MIME *is now unable to conceal his thoughts from him.* SIEGFRIED *compels him to confess his designs on his life.*

S'FRIED: Taste then my sword,
Infamous serpent!
For this I forged the weapon!
[*With a single blow he lays* MIME *dead.*

WOODBIRD: Hey! Siegfried hath slain
Now the infamous dwarf.
I know for him now
A glorious wife.

In guarded fastness she sleeps:
A fire burns round her room.
O'erstep he the blaze,
Waked he the bride,
Brunnhilde would then be his.

S'FRIED: Forth I'll hasten then exulting;
Forth from the wood to the fell.

SCENE III

At the foot of the VALKYRIE'S *rocks stands* WOTAN, *disguised as the Wanderer. Enter* SIEGFRIED. *The* WANDERER *refuses to let him pass.*

S'FRIED: Oh! ho! my withholder,
And who are you, who thus arrests my road?

WOTAN: My spear shall spare thee no path.
The sword that thou sway'st
Was shivered on this shaft:
So, too, again
'Twill snap on the eternal spear.

S'FRIED: Then my father's foe faces me here!
How that will serve me
For sweet revenge.

[*He attacks the wanderer and hews his spear in pieces.*

WOTAN: Advance! I cannot hinder thee.

[*The stage becomes filled with a rolling sea of fire.* SIEGFRIED *plunges into the flames, and at the top of the rock finds* BRUNNHILDE *sleeping. He removes her armour, and wakens her with a kiss.*

BRUNN.: Who is he who rouses me?

S'FRIED: Siegfried I
By whom thou art awaked.

BRUNN.: O Siegfried, Siegfried,
Sanctified hero!
Oh knowest thou, Lord of the World,
How long thou hast had my love?

I loved thee always,
For I alone
Distinguished Wotan's intention:
Truly that intention
Was but my love should be thine!

S'FRIED: With timid fear thou fillest me:
For thou alone
Has fear aroused in me!
Laugh that thou livest,
Sweetest delight!
Be mine! be mine! be mine!

BRUNN.: Oh Siegfried, thine
Ever I've been!

S'FRIED: Ever thou hast been,
Then so abide!

BRUNN.: Thine ever will I be.
Gladly Love do I glow with!
Gladly yield to thee blindly!
Gladly glide to destruction!
Gladly go to the grave!
Thou art for ever
My own and my only!
Love that illumines,
Laughing at death!

Götterdämmerung

(The Dusk of the Gods)

PRELUDE:—*On the Valkyrie's rock by night, sit the three Nornir (Fates), weaving their rope of runes. It breaks in the middle, and they disappear, knowing that the end of the Gods is at hand. At dawn, "Siegfried" arises, to part from Brunnhilde, and go to fresh exploits. At parting, he gives her the Ring, and she gives him her horse, Grane, in return.*

SCENE I

The Hall of the Gibichungs, on the Rhine. GUNTHER, HAGEN, *and* GUTRUNE,[1] *sister to Gunther.*

HAGEN: In radiance of summer brightness
Rises Gibich's race.
But Gunther fails to wed
Gutrune finds no mate.
A wife awaits him
The fairest in the world:
A far-off rock's her home,
Fire burns around her hall,
He alone who braves that fire
May fitly woo Brunnhilde!

GUNTHER: And may not my might so far stretch?

HAGEN: For a stronger it is reserved:
Siegfried of Walsung descent,
His is the strongest hand,
Him I'd have for Gutrune's mate.

GUNTHER: And Brunnhilde's won only by him?

HAGEN: To no other waneth the blaze.

[1] Or Gudrun, who is the same as Kriemhild in the German version of the story, just as the name of Siegfried also occurs as Sigurd among the many different variations of the myth, etc.

GUNTHER: Why wouldst thou induce in me
Desire for a treasure
I may not touch?
HAGEN: Thy prayer could work thy wishes
If Gutrune wove a spell.
GUTRUNE: Thou scoffest, wicked Hagen!
How can I bind this man?
HAGEN: Recall the drink in your shrine:
The hero for whom thou burnest
Fondly it will bind to thy heart.
Bid now but Siegfried come
And taste of the wonderful draught:
That he'd seen any woman ere thee
Would utterly pass from his mind.

[*A horn is heard in the distance.*

HAGEN: Within a vessel, a horse and man!
Siegfried it is, surely no other!

[*Enter* SIEGFRIED, *leading Grane.*

SIEGFRIED: Which is Gibich's son?
GUNTHER: Gunther, I, whom thou seek'st.

[SIEGFRIED *and* GUNTHER *exchange presents, and take the oath of blood-brotherhood.* HAGEN *tells* SIEGFRIED *of the powers of the Tarnhelm, or invisible helmet.* GUTRUNE *then brings a magic drink, which causes* SIEGFRIED *to utterly forget* BRUNNHILDE, *and to fall violently in love with herself.* GUNTHER *agrees to bestow her hand upon him if he will fetch* BRUNNHILDE, *disguising himself with the Tarnhelm, so that she may believe that it is* GUNTHER *himself who fetches her.*

SCENE II

The Valkyrie's Rock. Valtrauta has come to see if her sister is awake yet, and tells her of WOTAN'S *fears.*

VALTRAUTA: Deep sighs he uttered:
Closed his eyelids as he were dreaming, and spake
these words:

"The day the Rhine's three daughters
Gain by surrender from her the Ring,
From the curse's load
Released are Gods and men."
Then, my sister I supplicate:—
Ward off the woe of the Gods!

BRUNNHILDE: The Ring! Resign?

VALTRAUTA: Surrender it back to the Rhine!

BRUNNHILDE: Surrender it? I? The Ring?

Siegfried's bridal gift?
More than Walhall's honour
More than the Eternal Realm
I hold this Ring.
One look at its beauteous Gold
Delights me more than unending good to all the Eternal Gods.
I'll lose not love from my heart!
No command can hinder my loving:
Sooner to ruins Walhalla's splendour shall crash!

VALTRAUTA: Woe's me! Woe's me!

Woe to thee, sister!
Woe to Walhalla's Gods!

[*She rides off hastily. Through the flames comes* SIEGFRIED, *in* GUNTHER'S *form.*

BRUNNHILDE (*in horror*): What man art thou?

SIEGFRIED: A Gibichung am I and Gunther is my name, who, maid, will mate with thee.

BRUNNHILDE: Wotan! Resentful! stern-hearted sire!

Woe! Now I fathom thy fiat fell.
My shame and sorrow well hast thou shaped!

[SIEGFRIED *seizes her and tears the ring from her finger.*

Scene III

Night. River bank before the hall of the Gibichungs: Hagen *pretending to sleep:* Alberic crouching in *front of him.*

Alberic: Rendered Siegfried ever the Ring to the daughters of Rhine?
For ever gone were the gold and no art could earn it again.
Thou'lt vanquish Walsung and Wotan;
Swear to me, Hagan, my son.
Hagen: The Ring I'll seize—rest in peace.
[*As the sun rises,* Alberic *vanishes: Enter* Siegfried.
Siegfried: From Brunnhilde's rock swift was my flight:
Slower will follow the pair. Wakes Gutrune yet?
[*Enter* Gutrune.
Freely deign to show me favour:
As wife I've won thee to-day.
Gutrune: Didst conquer the maid so fierce?
Siegfried: She felt—Gunther's might.
Gutrune: Was she married then to thee?
Siegfried: Twixt the East and the West lies North:
[*Pointing to his sword.*
So near was Brunnhilde to me.
[Gunther *and* Brunnhilde *enter a boat.* Brunnhilde *sees* Siegfried *with* Gutrune.
Brunnhilde: Siegfried—here? Gutrune?
Siegfried: Gunther's mild-eyed sister:
Mate to me as thou to him.
Brunnhilde: I?—Gunther?—You lie!
I see not the light:
Siegfried . . . knows me not!
Ha! That Ring upon his hand.
He . . . Siegfried?—

On thy hand there I spy a ring
Thou holdest wrongly.
It was ravished (*pointing to* GUNTHER) by this man!
GUNTHER (*greatly perplexed*): The Ring!—I gave him not.
BRUNNHILDE: Where guardest thou the Ring?
That thou didst force from me?
GUNTHER (*much puzzled, remains silent*).
BRUNNHILDE: Ha! this one 'twas then
That from me wrenched the ring!
Siegfried, the treacherous thief!
HAGEN: If 'tis that Ring that Gunther gained
He owns it still,—
And Siegfried has won it by trick:
Which the traitor should pay for straight.
GUNTHER: Brunnhilde! my consort, calm thyself!
BRUNNHILDE: Away, thou traitor!
Thou art betrayed too.
Siegfried yonder was wed to me:
He forced delights of love from me.
SIEGFRIED: Art so careless of thine honour?
Blood-brotherhood Gunther and I have sworn:
"Nothung," my goodly sword,
Guarded the oath intact:
Its edge did keep me sundered
From this ill-omened bride.

[*Exit with* GUTRUNE: *all follow him, except* BRUNNHILDE *and* HAGEN.

HAGEN: Have trust in me, betrayed dame
And for thy wrongs I'll wreak revenge.
BRUNNHILDE (*laughs bitterly*): On Siegfried?—thou!
HAGEN: I mind well Siegfried's
Sovereign might,
He scarce were mastered in battle:
But whisper to me

Some cunning way
To make him weak in my hands.
BRUNNHILDE: Each single art
That once I owned
Did I lend his life to protect:
Magical means I used
Safely to ward him from wounds.
Never, I well knew,
Would he retreat
And turn his back to the foeman;
And so no spell did I set there.
HAGEN: And there I'll set my spear!

SCENE IV

A wild wood and a rocky valley by the Rhine. SIEGFRIED, *having separated from the rest of the hunt in pursuit of a bear, comes on the Rhine maidens, who beg him to restore the Ring: on his refusal they tell him the story of the curse.* GUNTHER, HAGEN, *and vassals appear. They sit down, and to divert* GUNTHER, SIEGFRIED *tells the story of his life, and how he came to kill* MIME. HAGEN *mingles the juice of a herb with the drink, and hands it to* SIEGFRIED.

HAGEN: Drink, hero, from my horn:
I mingled a herb with the draught
To awaken and hold thy remembrance,
That past things may be apparent.
[SIEGFRIED *drinks from the cup, and recalls his first meeting with* BRUNNHILDE.
GUNTHER: What sayest thou?
[*Two ravens fly in, circle over* SIEGFRIED, *and cross the Rhine.*
HAGEN: Canst read the speech
Of those ravens aright?

[SIEGFRIED *starts up and looks after the birds, turning his back to* HAGEN.

HAGEN: Revenge they rouse in me!

[*Thrusts his spear into* SIEGFRIED'S *back.* GUNTHER *catches his arm, but too late.*

GUNTHER and Vassals: Hagen, what deed is this?

[SIEGFRIED *attempts to crush* HAGEN: *his strength fails, and he falls back, dying.*

SIEGFRIED: Thrice blessed ending!
Thrill that dismays not!
Brunnhilde beckons me—ah!

[*He falls back dead.*

SCENE V

The Hall of the Gibichungs. Enter GUNTHER, *and a crowd bearing the body of* SIEGFRIED. GUTRUNE *throws herself on the body.*

GUNTHER: Gutrune! lovely sister!
Lift up thine eyes,
Speak unto me!

GUTRUNE: Siegfried!—Siegfried is slaughtered!
Hence, treacherous brother,
Assassin of my husband,
Ye have my Siegfried slain!

GUNTHER: Reproach thou rather Hagen,
He is the accurs'd wild boar
By whom this hero is slain.

HAGEN: Well, then, 'tis I have slain him!
I—Hagen—smote him dead!
Holiest booty—right
Here to me should be rendered:
Wherefore I demand this Ring!

GUNTHER: Away! thou ne'er shalt touch
What I mine own declare.
Seekest thou Gutrune's dowry,
Thou spawn of dwarfish stock?

HAGEN (*drawing his sword*): The dwarf's own dower
Thus, thus—his son assumes.

[*He rushes on* GUNTHER. *They fight:* GUNTHER *is killed.* HAGEN *snatches at the ring on* SIEGFRIED'S *hand, which raises itself threateningly: general terror:* BRUNNHILDE *enters.*

GUTRUNE: Brunnhilde, hurt by baseness,
Thou broughtest on us this harm:
'Tis thou didst stir them to kill him.
Woe the day thou camest hither!

BRUNNHILDE: Nay, poor soul, peace!
His wife *thou* never wast:
Thou ownedst him only in name.
Myself was his honoured spouse:
The oath of our union was sworn
Ere Siegfried thy face had seen.

GUTRUNE: Accursed Hagen!
Thou gavest me the hateful philtre
To make her husband play false.
Oh, sorrow! sorrow!
I see it all now.
Brunnhilde was his true love,
Whom he betrayed by that draught.

[*At* BRUNNHILDE'S *bidding, a huge funeral pyre is erected.* SIEGFRIED'S *body is placed upon it. She takes from his finger the Ring, and places it on her own finger.*

BRUNNHILDE: Thou fatal round!
Fearfulest Ring!
Ye water-dwelling sisters,
The Rhine's fair-springing daughters:
What ye would gain
I give to you:
Out of my ashes
Take it for ever.
The red flame that burneth me

Cleanses the Ring from its curse.
Draweth near in gloom
The dusk of the Gods:
Thus casting my torch
I kindle Walhalla's towers!

[*She thrusts a torch into the pyre. Mounting the horse Grane she leaps into the blazing mass. The fire falls together, leaving only a mass of smoke. The Rhine swells tremendously, and sweeps over the fire. The Rhine-daughters swim up.* HAGEN *dashes into the water at them, shouting:* "Away from the Ring!" *Woglinde and Wellgunde twine their arms round him and drag him under.* FLOSSHILDE *joyously holds up the Ring. In the sky appears the Hall of Walhalla, Gods and heroes sitting together. Bright flames seize on the abode of the Gods, and when this is completely enveloped by them the curtain falls.*